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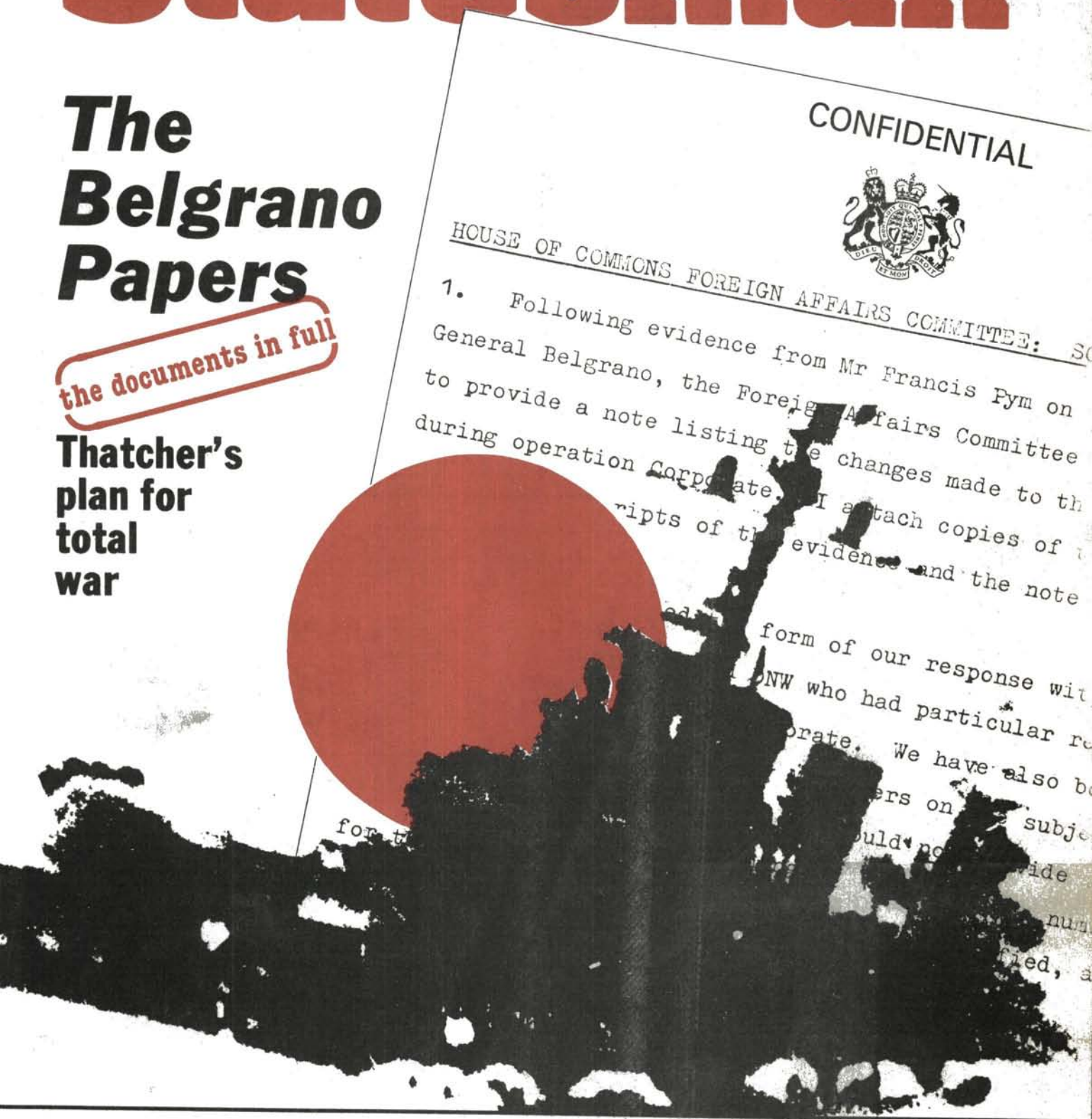
New Statesman

The Belgrano Papers

the documents in full

Thatcher's plan for total war


CONFIDENTIAL
HOUSE OF COMMONS FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE:
1. Following evidence from Mr Francis Pym on
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PLUS: Smack and sensationalism • Blackpool: the last resort • Miners and the TUC • Edinburgh Festival • NS poetry award

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New Statesman

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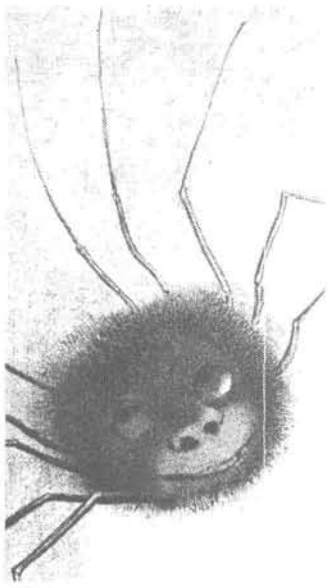
Cover photo: John Hillelson Agency

The Belgrano Papers
The top secret plans for all-out war in the South Atlantic, published in full. Duncan Campbell and John Rentoul tell the full story with further revelations from other sources p.8

The last resort
Tory Blackpool doesn't want to know about what's on the beach. Kevin Sutcliffe reports p.10

Prudence Farmer Award
Michael Hofman assesses a year's worth of *NS* poetry and picks his favourite from 1983-'84 p.21

On with the dance
Angus Calder takes a critical look at this year's Edinburgh Festival p.25



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New from CND

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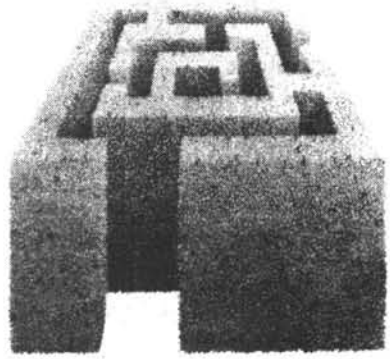

George Crossley

CND

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New Statesman

Vol 108 No 2788 24 August 1984

Why the Belgrano Papers matter

FOR OVER two years, the unlikely dissident, Tam Dalyell MP, Eton, Cambridge and the Royal Scots Greys, has pursued one target with a dedication that his one-time enemies on the radical wing of politics would envy and which most found mystifying. That was — why did the Royal Navy sink the *General Belgrano*, causing the death of 368 men?

Mrs Thatcher has on occasions protested that the truth will emerge in 30 years time. Perhaps she means that Argentina was far nearer to winning a military victory than anyone in Britain could possible have afforded to admit at the time. Such a defeat would almost certainly have led to her ignominious defeat at a General Election. Instead of a resounding symbolic triumph for British bulldog values, she would have had a humiliating bungle on her hands, saved from being tawdry only by the tragedy of the number of lives that would have been wasted.

In fact, far too soon for the Prime Minister, the truth is beginning to emerge now. It is that the government secretly conducted a strategy of all-out war, including the preparation of nuclear threats, in order to save its political skin. The strategy caused hundreds of unnecessary deaths — but risked causing many thousands more. In order to achieve its objective, the government handed the direction of the conflict over to competing armed service interests, while maintaining that the opposite was the case.

Much of this we can deduce from the Belgrano Papers, here reprinted in full on pages 8-10. Although the House of Commons Select Committee has returned them to the Ministry of Defence, it clear that they are of vital public interest and, given that absolutely no risk to national security is involved, the British public has a right to know exactly what is at issue. The briefing note is classified Confidential, the second lowest grade of secrecy. The letter was initially written without any secrecy conditions.

From the documents and other sources, we can see that within a few weeks of the Task Force leaving Britain the political direction of the conflict had been subsumed by military interests. This is dangerous enough when a war is on. No war was declared. While the diplomatic voices both within the Cabinet — most notably Francis Pym's — and the Labour Party were still asserting, after the Belgrano was sunk, the supremacy of political control, the War Cabinet had long agreed that the armed forces should fight an all-out war, without informing Argentina, the US or the UN.

On 4 May 1982, Parliament debated the sinking of the *Belgrano*. Denis Healey stated what had always been the official position on the conflict, and the condition which secured Labour's unhappy acquiescence to it and its aftermath.

> The right hon gentleman [John Nott, then Defence Secretary] rightly said in his press conference last night that his policy was and would always be to use minimum force under strict political control to achieve a diplomatic solution. I confess that it is not always easy to achieve that in the stress of battle. Nevertheless, on the evidence that he has just given, it seems that he has successfully achieved that objective. . .

Mr Healey did not in fact know that the situation was far graver than just sinking the *Belgrano*. Nonetheless Mr Nott replied:

> The right hon gentleman is correct. I said at a press conference yesterday that it was our policy to use minimum force. The task force remains under the political control of the Government. It operates within a political framework.

MR NOTT was not telling the truth. He more than most would know of the competitive ambitions of the service chiefs to engage in unrestrained fighting. In particular, the navy wanted to push its claims that its surface fleet was an indispensible part of Britain's defence system. A year before, on 25 June, Mr Nott had published his review of defence spending which had proposed severe curtailment of the service fleet in particular, and a reduction in Royal Navy personnel of 8-10,000, a heavier cut than either the Army of the RAF faced. He had also warned that the decisions should be made 'in terms of real defence capability rather than as the outcome of a debilitating argument over each service's budgetary share.' In the year that followed, the navy had been doing what it could to prove Mr Nott's assessment of its role wrong — and his fears of interservice rivalry right.

Thus, while in April-May 1982 all the armed forces in the Falklands, anxious to prove the worth of their section, were spoiling to move without political constraints, no section was more anxious to come out on top than the navy. It was as much the long-term threats from the British government and British public opinion as the immediate military threat from Argentina, that caused them to press on the War Cabinet the need for changes in the Rules of Engagement. The Prime Minister, faced with a warning that she might lose what had become undeclared war, would not need much persuasion that if she had to choose between a compromise diplomatic settlement with Argentina or deceiving the House of Commons and British public she should lie.

From the first misleading statements that the Argentinian attack on the Falklands had come 'out of the blue' through the frequent assertions by Ministers that they were seeking a diplomatic solution, to the repeated claims that the *Belgrano* was only sunk because it was a specific threat to British troops, she and her Cabinet have maintained those lies. In the long run, perhaps the most serious information to come out is that a Polaris submarine was sent to the South Atlantic. To send a submarine which fires nuclear missiles presupposes a readiness to use it — with catastrophic consequences. It presupposes that the government was prepared to accept the most terrible escalation of the conflict before it would allow diplomatic and political values to take precedence over its own need to survive. No fact can be more damning of a political clique's fitness to govern.

Mr Dalyell's campaign to get to the truth of an affair which cost the lives of over 1,000 people and cost British people £3.8 billion is neither eccentric nor irrelevant. It touches the heart of how British political power operates. For the Falklands war and its subsequent cover-up is a peculiarly chilling example of how the pursuit of sectional self-serving interests can be metamorphosed into a compelling 'national interest'. It is a tragedy that the Labour Party was from the first hi-jacked by a misguided patriotism. The repeated assertions by Labour's defence spokesman Denzil Davies that the conduct of the war is not, even now, a 'party political issue' constitute a pitiful refusal to get to grips with political power and public opinion. In this failure, the Labour Party continues to squander the opportunity to assert the 'paramountcy' of democratic political control over the most vital conflicts of all. If the 'national interest' means anything, it must mean the sovereignty of political democracy. Mr Dalyell has quite rightly recognised the special role of the MP in cherishing that sovereignty. □

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Agro aggro after 60 years of (ac)quiescence

NEXT WEEK'S overtime ban in selected areas by agricultural workers — set to last from Bank Holiday weekend to 1 September — may not sound much, and has been timed to coincide with the end of harvest. But it's the first breach of peace in the industry for 60 years.

The antediluvian amazement of the National Farmers Union (NFU) may be gauged from the fact that it has informed employers in a circular that 'the only recourse open to the employer [other than not paying for work not done] would be to consider dismissal but *this would hardly be appropriate in the circumstances*' (our italics).

The scattered agricultural labour force, with its still quasifeudal dependence on the landowners, is angry at the glaring gulf between soaring farm incomes and its own notoriously low wages. Since 1924 minimum rates have been negotiated annually by an Agricultural Wages Board (AWB), today made up of eight representatives each from the NFU and the TGWU's agricultural and allied workers' national trade group, plus five 'independents'.

But workers have been pushing for change since the 1983 Annual Review of Agriculture revealed that 1982 had brought a staggering 45 per cent improvement in farm incomes. The estimate was subsequently revised down to 37 per cent, but farmworkers' 1983 pay increases had nonetheless been fixed (at end-1982) at 7.1 per cent.

The eruption of anger among workforce representatives on the AWB yielded an interim agreement for a further 5 per cent pay increase from September 1983. This took the basic weekly minimum wage to £79.20. Perhaps more important, it was at last agreed that AWB pay-talks should in future be held in the spring *after* publication of the Annual Review, with its vital statistics on how the employers are doing.

Bitter harvest

AFTER ALL THIS, and almost, it seems, as a retribution for the two catch-up increases of 1983, farmworkers this year were offered a 4.5 per cent award to bring their weekly minimum up to just under £83 — some £35 a week less than the average in manufacturing.

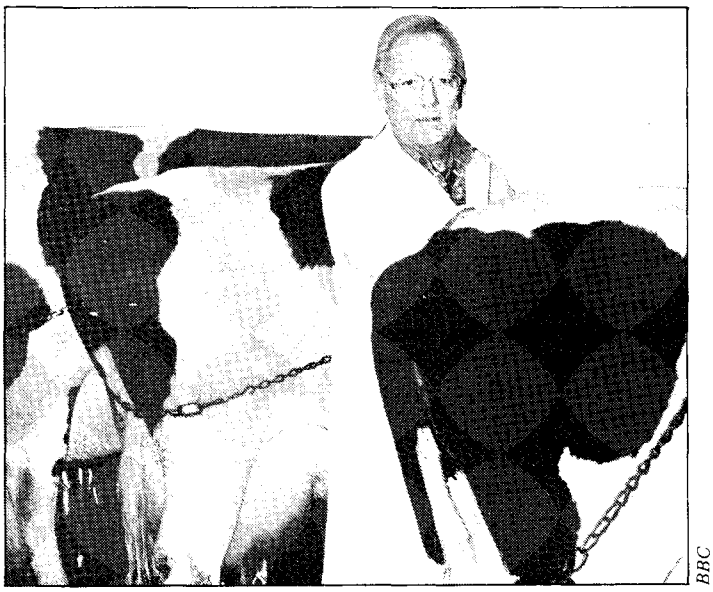
At the same time, and almost overshadowing the news, it was announced (27 April) that the trusted independent chairperson of the AWB, Prof Gordon Dickson, had been booted out by Agriculture Minister Michael Jopling. Claiming that Dickson had lost the confidence of the employers' representatives, Jopling refused to renew Dickson's contract.

Even the NFU immediately denied that it wanted Dickson out, and as for the workers' side, they were stunned. As AWB chair, Dickson had hardly brought farmworkers the standard of living they seek, but he was regarded as fair — and, if *he* wasn't good enough for the employers (in Jopling's view) what sort of character would be dug up to replace him?

No one, was the answer, between Dickson's departure at end-May this year and 10 August, giving rise to fears that the government's real plan was to abolish the AWB. But then Jopling produced Prof David Walker, head of Exeter university's economics department. How good a chair he'll be remains to be seen, but at least the AWB seems guaranteed a further three years' existence.

Meantime the selective overtime ban now starting up is a warning shot from the agricultural labour force that it aims to see the minimum wage lifted next year to £130 a week. The wages-bargaining at next spring's AWB meeting could be the roughest ever, particularly if next February's Annual Review of Agriculture turns out to show another soaraway year in farm revenues for 1984.

Renee Danziger



BBC

Left: Phil Archer wasn't being all that decent to farm hand Neil, whose wife Susan is in hospital with their baby, who's in intensive care, but now Phil has let Neil take time off to take in her clean washing and be with her a bit more. . .and so on. Labour relations in the BBC's The Archers *— posing here, two real cows and Norman Painting, who plays farmer Phil. But who's in chains in real life?*

Jenkin to stomp on the house grants queue

A WHITE PAPER due to be published in the autumn will suggest such strict means-testing of housing improvement grants that they will effectively be abolished for all but people on welfare benefits. And even *they* probably won't be able to afford them because the grants won't cover 100 per cent of repair costs.

A confidential working paper prepared by the Department of Environment (DoE) improvement policy review group, as the basis for the White Paper, has been passed to the *New Statesman*. It suggests means-testing grants either indirectly through stricter limits on the rateable value of housing eligible for grants (currently £225 except in London where it's £400) or through the income of recipients.

It also puts forward the idea of enabling landlords who improve their houses to dodge the Rent Act by imposing 'market level' rents.

The 250-page paper outlines the history of the improvement grant system and finds it

- inefficient,
- a recipe for shoddy work,
- and targeted towards affluent people in relatively good housing.

Much of this is uncontentious in that most housing organisations have criticised the system. But the recommendations of the report have been hijacked by the Treasury, which dissents from many of its more sensible suggestions.

The Treasury's approach to improvement grants can now be seen from its dissenting appendix to the DoE working paper: 'the alternative approach', it says, 'would move the policy emphasis away from grants and tax reliefs [towards] the encouragement of unsubsidised markets . . . the whole of the grant system might most efficiently be seen as a social services function. [This approach] would to a large extent be handing over the determination of national housing standards in the private sector from the Government to individual house owners.'

Interestingly, the Treasury admits that its policy would prove unpopular with owner-occupiers living in unimproved properties: 'Some of these households might be penalised very heavily by any sharp withdrawal of subsidies'. And these, often first-time buyers, are a significant political constituency.

The previous boosting of improvement grants was widely seen as an election ploy. Grants doubled in each of the last three years, from £144m in 1980-81 to over £900m in the last financial year. Spending on improvement grants has indeed increased so rapidly that it was one of the causes of DoE Secretary Patrick Jenkin's onslaught on councils' capital spending.

Maggie's own backyard, Barnet, provides an excellent example of how the system is overstretched. Last week's *Finchley and District Advertiser* reports that the Council has a backlog of 2,000 households waiting for a first inspection but can only deal with 500 per year because of lack of cash: 'It will take until 1991 to deal with all existing applications' a council report notes. By which time improvement grants will be confined to the history books.

Christian Wolmar

David Fowler

Jenkin — no more calls, please

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French too get fed up with UK censorship

CUSTOMS & EXCISE are to be taken before the EEC Commission in Brussels by the French weekly *Gai Pied* to protest detention of issue 123 at a British port of entry this June. Copies of the news-magazine, which is five years old and claims a circulation of 30,000, were being imported as usual by Gay's the Word bookshop in London's Bloomsbury.

Gai Pied (the name is both a sexual joke and a play on the word *guèpe* or wasp) is advised that as a newspaper registered in France it may have a case against Customs & Excise under the 'freedom of movement of goods' guarantee of the Treaty of Rome, to which the UK is a signatory.

Member states of the EEC can show clear case-law that books/other materials deemed by any member state to be 'pornographic' can be kept out, despite freedom of movement of goods, for reasons of 'morality'. But no-one can recall the 'morality' loophole ever being tested in the case of a newspaper whose publication

No defence of literary or artistic merit, let alone of serious political intent, is open to a UK importer who wishes to resist censorship by HM Customs & Excise. Gai Pied (above) *is one of the three best known periodicals for gays in the world. It helped procure a gay rights commitment in France, which was carried through, at the time of the Socialist election victories in 1981.*

and distribution is officially licensed in an EEC member country, and which is freely circulated in other member states.

It's possible that Customs & Excise may back off in the face of this plainly unexpected development. 'Detention' of books or magazines by Customs & Excise isn't of necessity followed by 'seizure' — the stage at which a would-be importer has 30 days in which to contest seizure in the courts or forfeit the material — and Customs could even now let issue 123 go forward to Gay's the Word.

The aspect of issue 123 which upset a woman Customs officer at Dover (so *Gai Pied* are given to understand) was an illustrated survey of the commercial gay sex 'industry' in France. The news-magazine is politically committed — eg in 1980 it scooped the last-ever interview with Sartre — and is freely distributed throughout France under the distribution laws which Labour has a manifesto commitment to introduce in the UK.

Andrew Lumsden

● Since its 10 April raid on the premises and directors' homes of Gay's the Word, which has produced Questions to the Chancellor in Parliament, Customs & Excise has interfered with five other would-be UK importers of gay reading matter, besides continued detention of further material intended for Gay's the Word. NCCL has prioritised Customs' treatment of Gay's the Word as a major civil liberties issue, and will provide the legal defence for any trials which may ensue.

Emergency wards

(1) South London Women's

THE LIE-IN at the South London Women's Hospital, begun on 26 July as a final attempt to oppose closure, continues eventfully.

On 10 August, the Hospital Occupation Committee gave permission to the district head of pharmacy to remove all drugs in the hospital which could still be used to treat patients. A van arrived to take away the boxes of drugs — with 10 men to carry them.

Wandsworth Health Authority explained they'd wanted as much help as possible — but a spokesperson for the Occupation Committee said, 'They obviously weren't there just to carry the boxes. There were only a few of those. Many women were frightened'.

Most of the hospital has now been closed, with only out-patients and ante-natal remaining. The National Union of Public Employees (NUPE) has withdrawn official supprt as only 30 staff are left.

Disturbed by news that a male doctor has been installed in out-patients, the Committee have been organising workshops on women's medical problems.

(2) St Leonard's, Hackney

AT ONE TIME scheduled for closure, St Leonards, Hackney, East London, is to become a 'community facility', or an up-graded clinic, including chiropody and physiotherapy.

Campaigners have now directed their energies towards checking that the 50 beds in St Bartholomew's hospital filled by patients from St Leonard's, will be maintained, and not be gradually phased out.

A fight for reinstatement of two workers suspended for opposing the district health authority's plans for the hospital continues.

Sue Rylance

MISCELLANY

The hard cell

Investors behind the biggest private hospital company in the US, Hospital Corporation of America, have set up a new venture to reach the parts that other capitalists can't reach. Corrections Corporation of America is bringing free enterprise to the jails business; it has just opened what it describes as 'a 350-bed detention facility for undocumented aliens' in Houston, Texas. The corporation has financed, built and is running the

prison: all the government Immigration Service has to do is pay $24 a day for each alien held. This simplifies the growing problem of housing Latin Americans caught slipping across the Mexican border. Corrections Corporation is now confident it will win two other local prison contracts: Rutherford County jail in Tennessee and Tasco prison in Florida are about to be privatised. The company's literature offers to provide anything from maximum security jails for adults to rehabilitation centres for juveniles. With American's prison population at 400,000 and rising, the propects are bright. Finance director Travis Snellings says the firm is now 'on the cutting edge of a whole new industry'.

Hop off, Kelvin

The *Sun* said on Tuesday under the headline 'Hop off, Tam': 'The *Belgrano* bore, Labour MP Tam Dalyell, is making a nuisance of himself again over the sinking of the Argentine cruiser in the Falklands war. How long will it take this ninny to grasp the simple truth that better a thousand dead Argentinians than one British Serviceman?' O printworkers, where were you?

Out of the job

Metropolitan police commissioner Sir Kenneth Newman probably thought he was making polite conversation at a recent social function at Scotland Yard, when he congratulated the editor of the force's newspaper, Mike Barnard, on the excellent job he was doing. The next day Mr Barnard and the Met's newspaper 'parted company', in the quaint phrase of Dogberry, the gossip columnist of the Police Federation's magazine, *Police*, who has been observing the dispute. Apparently Mr Barnard got the worse of an argument over editorial independence, which he took to mean the right to amend the turgid prose produced by the Met hierarchy. Sir Kenneth is now going to be called as a witness by Mr Barnard at his industrial tribunal.

Innocent offensive

The *Daily Telegraph* this week hailed the 'start of a back-to-work offensive by wives of moderate miners', and quoted Irene McGibbon as saying that she had had an 'overwhelming' response. Mrs McGibbon, 'married to a Kent miner', angrily denied suggestions that the offensive was a Conservative campaign. The *Telegraph* swallowed this propaganda eagerly, apparently oblivious to the fact that Mr and Mrs McGibbon are both well-known strike-breakers and are both paid-up members of the Conservative Party. In fact Mrs McGibbon stood in council elections last year in a mining area and was defeated by 1,300 votes by a local miner. The couple moved to Kent and the coal industry after a long career at Cowley, where Robert McGibbon worked for BL and led the campaign against Alan Thornett, the TGWU deputy convenor. The campaign attracted plenty of press coverage and led to Thornett being ousted. Mrs McGibbon admits she has asked the right-wing Freedom Association for help in the miners' strike — they advised Robert he could leave the NUM and not be dismissed — but she says she has also consulted the TUC, the SDP and Frank Chapple, the leader of the electricians' union. It makes you wonder if all those stories about moles subverting UK industry don't have something in them after all.

Ever wished you were better informed?

This cannot go on, say the Liberals. Quite so. This front page story in *The Times* appeared exactly a week after the Liberal strategy document was exclusively revealed in the *New Statesman* (10 August). *The Times*'s Philip Webster omitted to mention who was first with the news. Meanwhile, Liberal chairperson Paul Tyler (see Letters this week) is furious at the leak.

THE
FRIDAY AUGUST 17 1984
Alliance cannot go on in present form, say Liberals

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New lift-off demanded for STOLport enquiry

THE GREEN LIGHT for a businessman's airport in London's docklands — the STOLport (Short Take Off and Landing airport) — given last week by the Inspector to the STOLport enquiry has only intensified concern about the intentions of Mowlem's, the proposed airport developers. (See *New Statesman* 3 August 1984).

In his report the Inspector showed that he shared some of the fears of objectors about the difficulty of controlling expansion of the airport. He recommends regulations limiting the airport to aircraft as quiet as or quieter than the De Havilland Dash 7.

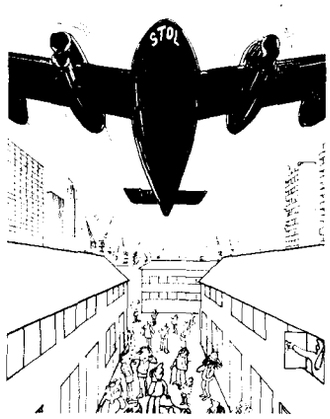
But the problem about how such conditions could be made effective stays unresolved. Patrick Jenkin as Environment Secretary has asked all parties to last year's public hearings to comment within 21 days on new noise control evidence from Tom King's Transport Department before he makes his final decision on STOLport.

But the main objectors want more than that: they want the public enquiry reconvened. Newham, Greenwich, and Southwark councils, the GLC, the TGWU, and the local Campaign against the Airport, argue that *enforcement* of noise controls is fully as much the issue as technological possibilities in noise-control.

The Inspector seems to agree with them: 'many local people would feel easier', he writes in his Conclusions, 'if the consent of Newham borough council was required before any changes could be made in the agreement' — ie in the Section 52 agreement which contains restrictions on runway length, aircraft type, noise levels and measurement etc.

Mowlem's threatened to withdraw when Newham council, which at present only has consultative status on such expansion threats as runway length and helicopters, proposed a veto over changes to the agreement. 'The applicants (Mowlem's)' reported the Inspector 'argue that the Section 52 agreement must be open to some adjustment — it wouldn't be prudent for any business venture to be locked into an inflexible position at the outset. "Profitability" is in the interest of the community'.

Objectors pressing for the Inspector's suggestion of local authority planning control will face not only the opposition of business but also of the government appointed London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), which has taken over all planning development powers in London's Docklands. Local authority planning control over the STOLport would represent a major encroachment on the LDDC's power. And a precedent for breaches in LDDC power elsewhere.



Local support for Newham council's stand will be strong. For although the community were divided about the original proposal for the airport they are united in their fears of airport expansion. Moreover the Inspector's report casts serious doubt on the promises of job creation which led many local people to accept the STOLport.

He says 'There is little hard evidence to support the opinion that a STOLport by itself would act as a major catalyst in the regeneration of the Royal Docks, and the "induced employment" forecasts have a particularly speculative ring to them.'

Hilary Wainwright

Upper classes

IN AN unprecedented move to make Oxford colleges more responsive to local community feeling, Oxford city council is to consider a scheme designed to reduce intolerable noise levels during college summer balls.

The scheme would require college ball committees to deposit £10,000 with the city council as an insurance against future violations of council noise abatement orders.

The proposal, made by councillor David Whitfield, comes in the wake of this year's controversial Worcester College ball when the volume of rock music and fireworks infuriated Oxford residents across the 3-mile radius throughout the night.

This seems to be the first time in British legal history that a local authority has taken legal action against a university college over noise levels. The £10,000 deposit proposal is a reaction to the failure of the existing informal code of practice governing relations between the council and Oxford colleges.

Alan Griffiths, an Oxford law don and local city councillor, has denounced the proposal as 'a bloody stupid idea' and claims that in his opinion it has no clear legal basis and is unlikely to be passed when it is discussed next month.

Mike Dynes and Robert Moore

Campaign to rid homeless of SAFA rule

NICE for Rhodes Boyson, Minister of State for Social Security. With Parliament now on hols the heat's off on the most Kafka-esque of the DHSS's current policy messes, the SAFA rule.

This is the one which deprives claimants of furniture grants when at last they get a council home unless and until they can prove there's no bed and breakfast (B&B) or other furnished accommodation in the area *— even though it costs the public purse more to have people in B&B than to give a furniture grant and rent assistance in council lets.*

Conservative MP for Cheltenham Charles Irving organised an EDM (early day motion) on 12 July which attracted 54 MPs' signatures 'noting with concern' that claimants are being refused furniture grants, and stressing the financial nonsense as well as the human misery.

We tell a typical story below. DHSS furniture grants (non-discretionary since 1980 — see *NS* 27 July) are in principle available to claimants who are pregnant, who have young or old dependants, who are disabled or have been out of work for six months, and cannot find 'SAFA': suitable alternative furnished accommodation.

DHSS has been widely interpreting the latter provision to mean that otherwise entirely eligible applicants for furniture grants must take furnished accommodation if there is any (and in known instances give up just-obtained council housing) or prove — a laborious and costly undertaking — that no such furnished bedsits, B&Bs etc, are to be had.

CHAR, the Campaign for Single Homeless People, has launched a campaign to have the SAFA rule abolished, advocating a sole criterion of need for the furniture the claimant is otherwise too poor to buy. Their guide to DHSS furniture grant policy *Bare Boards* claims that the current system encourages 'a mean and hostile view of claimants'.

Just what the Policy Studies Institute found all too many DHSS staff guilty of in the suppressed part of its recent report (*NS* 27 July).

Martin Brown

Doug Poole

PETER AND SANDRA Jenner were offered a flat by Islington council in London last March. They were delighted. They'd spent the past 18 months in bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation — the first five of them in the Princes Lodge, Tower Hamlets, exposed in the Daily Mirror *between March-May this year.*

But until a short time ago they were sitting on milk-crates balanced on bare boards because the DHSS refused them a furniture grant under the SAFA rule. Yet at £50 a fortnight the council accommodation was saving over £100 a week on what it had been costing to keep them in B&Bs.

Peter, an unemployed builder aged 59, and Sandra, aged 39, were given the usual run-around about there being suitable alternative furnished accommodation in the area: so no furniture grant. It wasn't till Jeremy Corbyn (Islington North, Lab) took up the case as their MP that they were able to furnish at all. Their grant came through in the last week of July.

'What kind of system is it', asks Corbyn, 'that is willing to pay thousands of pounds to hoteliers for rooms no one should have to live in — yet begrudges the Jenners blankets and makes them live on bare boards?' ●

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PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Lies, damned lies and answers to Tam Dalyell

NOTHING MUCH happens in August, as every politician and journalist knows. Parliament rises, constituency general committees stop meeting, the talking classes go on holiday, and most current affairs programmes disappear from our TV screens. At other times of year events demand that ministers be called to account in the House of Commons or on *Weekend World*. Not so in August. Everyone who matters is on the grouse moors or in the Dordogne or, if they are sensible, in the west of Ireland. It is assumed that each contortion in the face of politics is frozen at the end of July and only comes to life again in September.

Would that it were so. In fact, August seems to have an unhappy habit of springing some of the nastiest surprises: the start of the First World War, the Hitler-Stalin pact, Hiroshima, the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia. The greatest of all affronts to civil liberties, the Official Secrets Act, passed through all its Commons stages on 18 August 1911; could it be that the decision to haul Mr Clive Ponting before the magistrates last Saturday on a charge of breaching Section Two was Whitehall's way of celebrating the Act's 73rd birthday?

This month, in fact, has fairly bubbled with political activity. The face of politics has been far from frozen during the three weeks I have been away. And while some of the changes look as if they will add to the government's unpopularity, others — perhaps the more durable ones — may well help Mrs Thatcher to recover support in time for the next general election.

Let's take the good news — that is, bad for Mrs Thatcher — first. Mr Tam Dalyell's campaign on the sinking of the *Belgrano* looks as if it may succeed. If it does, it will not be in the way Mr Dalyell first intended — discrediting the government's motives for sinking the ship — but in showing that ministers have lied subsequently. Indeed, the new documents, by revising what we know about the timing and scope of the changes in the rules of engagement, make it harder to sustain the belief that the dominating reason for sinking the *Belgrano* was, simultaneously, to sink the prospects of a negotiated settlement with Argentina.

In any case, there was never any chance that electoral popularity would be gained by saying that the ship should not have been sunk. The *Sun*'s initial headline — 'Gotcha' — was in bad taste, but undoubtedly in tune with most public sentiment. The significance of Mr Dalyell's campaign was not, until this week, that it threatened Mrs Thatcher's popularity, but that it nagged away at the truth and morality of what happened two years ago. Most other Labour MPs were ambivalent about Mr Dalyell's campaign. They correctly recognised its intrinsic merits, but equally correctly calculated that there was little in it for them.

Now the politics of the campaign have changed. The central issue is not whether it was right to sink the *Belgrano*: that is now subordinate to a new question — have ministers been lying about what happened? Zapping dagos is one thing: fibbing to Brits about it quite another. All governments require some degree of trust from the voters: this government needs it more than most, for it won its second period in office essentially asking the electorate to believe that the team that beat Argentina would, in the end, also beat Britain's economic problems. If it turns out that Mrs Thatcher cannot be trusted to tell the truth about the first, why should she be trusted to tell the truth about the second?

ANOTHER POTENTIAL problem for the government surfaced at the weekend: the report in the *Sunday Times* that a working party convened by Dr Rhodes Boyson, Minister for Social Security, is considering abolishing child benefit, on the grounds that most of the benefit goes to people other than the poor, and it would better to spend the money on income tax cuts. Should it happen, the change would be a political gift to Labour. Child benefit is popular with recipients, and is arguably the most effective weapon that any government has under the present tax and social security system for fighting poverty.

There are two reasons why child benefit is so effective, and should be increased rather than reduced or abolished. The first is that much of the worst poverty occurs among families with children; so in terms of family structure, child benefit reaches the right targets. The second is that the benefit is not means tested; so it is exempt from the problems associated with the poverty trap, in which pay rises can be wholly eaten up by higher taxes and the withdrawal of means-tested benefits.

The fact that child benefit is not means-tested has its inevitable consequence that better-off families also receive it. But this is not as pernicious as it might seem. For one thing, insofar as child benefit is paid for out of income tax, the better-off pay more for it anyway. (To put it the other way round: should the abolition of child benefit lead to tax cuts, many better-off families will gain more from the tax cuts than they will lose from the ending of the benefit.)

For another thing, child benefit involves two kinds of worthwhile redistribution that are concerned more with family structure than with the relief of poverty. It provides an income specifically for mothers; and it redistributes from people without children to people with them. To the extent that most people spend part of their adult lives as the parents of dependent children, and part of their adult lives free from such cares and/or joys, child benefit also acts to concentrate help to people when they need it most.

For anyone who has followed even cursorily the evolution of child benefit, these are familiar arguments. It seems surprising that they need to be resurrected now, following the reports that the government is thinking of doing something so daft and electorally damaging as to abolish the benefit.

I can think of only one explanation for what is now happening. It is that this hair-brained idea stands little chance of being translated into action, that the proposal was leaked to the *Sunday Times* with the express purpose of mobilising opposition to it, and that before long Mrs Thatcher will announce to a relieved Tory party that 'child benefit is safe with us'. It will, in fact, be a mini rerun of the Think Tank-public spending affair two years ago, when Andrew Neil (then on the *Economist*) last disclosed a piece of mindless official rubbish which the Prime Minister subsequently disowned.

STILL, the knowledge that, even in their darkest corners (especially in their darkest corners?) ministers are prepared to contemplate ever more fiendish ways of destroying what is good and fair in Britain, combined with their developing image as shifty liars, should all contribute to the government's increasing unpopularity.

But set that against one other development of the last few days: the plan to offer concessions to telephone subscribers who buy British Telecom shares. It is a reasonable bet that most *NS* readers need no instruction in the evils of privatising British Telecom. It is at least as reasonable a bet that most electors think differently, and that many will be attracted by the idea of owning their own direct share of Britain's telephone system.

The British Telecom wheeze is just the latest in a line of initiatives to develop the Tories' brand of peoples' capitalism. Others include cheaper air fares in Europe, moves towards portable pensions, and the possibility of bringing down car prices to nearer continental levels. The government's initiatives, however flawed we find them in both principle and detail, have the great political advantage of being both conspicuously right-wing and of immediate material benefit to significant numbers of people: maybe not the poor or the jobless or the old, but enough to win them a third spell in power. Where is the peoples' socialism to provide an attractive alternative to people drawn to cheaper cars and air fares and perks for Telecom shareholders? □

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FALKLANDS

All out war

The *New Statesman* is publishing for the first time the full text of the Belgrano Papers leaked to Tam Dalyell MP. Duncan Campbell and John Rentoul reveal the truth about the sinking of the *Belgrano*

THE REAL SECRETS behind the sinking of the Argentine cruiser *General Belgrano* have emerged from government documents and information obtained by the *New Statesman*. They show that the truth is far more damaging to Mrs Thatcher than anyone has yet realised — and explain why the government has mounted a two year long cover-up and lied at length about the attack on the *Belgrano*.

Crusading MP Tam Dalyell has repeatedly alleged that Mrs Thatcher deliberately ordered the *Belgrano* sunk, with the loss of 368 lives, in a successful attempt to scupper the Falklands peace plan proposed at the time by Peru. But the truth is that the 'war cabinet', largely dominated by military advice, had days before opted for an all-out attack against Argentine forces. They were then warned that their plan was probably illegal. Even as US Secretary of State Haig was still negotiating a peace settlement in Washington — in good faith — Mrs Thatcher ordered the sinking of the Argentine aircraft carrier, *Veinticinco de Mayo*, with 1500 men aboard.

Official Cabinet, Defence Ministry and Foreign Office documents state that:

- Two days before the *Belgrano* was sunk, Mrs Thatcher and the 'war cabinet' ordered an attack on the Argentine aircraft carrier and flagship. But nuclear submarine HMS *Splendid* failed to find the aircraft carrier in time. This attack was ordered while US Secretary of State Alexander Haig was still working on his peace plan;

- Foreign Secretary Pym and Attorney General Havers both warned the Prime Minister that to attack the aircraft carrier without warning was likely to be contrary to the United Nations treaty, and illegal under international law. The same arguments later applied to sinking the *Belgrano*. Their advice was disregarded.

- Britain contemplated using Polaris nuclear missiles against Argentina. A Polaris submarine was sent to the South Atlantic to be ready for action 'if need be'.

Each of these hitherto secret aspects of the South Atlantic war underscore the relentless determination of the Prime Minister, urged on by Royal Navy staff in particular, to seek a rapid and violent military resolution of the Falklands conflict.

The 'war cabinet', officially known as the Overseas and Defence Committee (South Atlantic), or OD(SA), consisted of Mrs Thatcher, Conservative chairman Cecil Parkinson, Defence Secretary John Nott, Foreign Secretary Francis Pym, Chief of the Defence Staff Admiral Sir Terence Lewin, and Leader of the House William Whitelaw. All of them attended the critical meeting in London on the morning of 30 April. Because of the legal issues involved the meeting was also attended by Attorney General Sir Michael Havers, who is officially the Cabinet's legal adviser.

When the OD(SA) group decided to sink the *Veinticinco de Mayo*, both Francis Pym and Michael Havers fervently dissented. Their dissent is recorded in a minute signed by both men, and dated 1 May 1982. It warns the Prime Minister that to attack the Argentine warship outside the exclusion zone was likely to be illegal. Pym signed the minute just before boarding a plane for Washington.

Sinking without warning any Argentine ship outside the exclusion zone was likely to be illegal because Britain was never at war with Argentina. British military action was justified under the terms of Article 51 of the United Nations Treaty. This grants every state the inherent right of self defence. But the right to use military action is thereby very strictly limited to actions in clear self defence — attacking Argentine vessels outside the exclusion zone when they had not attacked the task force would not be permitted.

The government prepared to justify the planned attack by reference to an announcement the week before that they would

1. Cheating the Select Committee

(This minute advised Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine and other ministers how to respond to a request from the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs for information about changes in the Rules of Engagement. It was written in early July 1984, and leaked to Mr Dalyell in mid-July. He sent his copies to Select Committee, who decided to return them to the Ministry of Defence.)

'CONFIDENTIAL'

HOUSE OF COMMONS FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE: SOUTH ATLANTIC ROE

1. Following evidence from Mr Francis Pym on the sinking of the General Belgrano, the Foreign Affairs Committee asked Lady Young to provide a note listing the changes made to the Rule of Engagement during operation Corporate. I attach copies of the relevant extracts from the transcripts of the evidence and the note from the Clerk to the Committee.

2. We have discussed the form of our response with the Defence Commitments Staff, DS5 and DNW who had particular responsibility for ROEs during Operation Corporate. We have also borne in mind the statements made to date by Ministers on the subject of the Belgrano. Our advice is that we should *not* provide the Committee with a note listing all the changes. There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly the ROE themselves are classified, and are drawn from the Fleet Operating and Tactical Instructions which is a classified document. The Committee have indicated that they would prefer the note to be unclassified. Secondly some of the ROE are... *illegible*... their effectiveness if they were... *illegible*... openly by the FAC. Thirdly, the production of a full list of all changes would be an extremely time consuming exercise, not only because of the difficulty of assembling this information from departmental records, but also because the ROE would have to be paraphrased at some length since their format would be almost incomprehensible to the layman. In addition a full list of changes would provide more information than Ministers have been prepared to reveal so far about the Belgrano affair. For instance, the list of changes in the period 2 April-7 May would show that the engagement of the Argentine aircraft carrier 25 DEMAYO outside the Total Exclusion Zone was permitted from 30 April, and that the change on 2 May was not restricted to BELGRANO but included all Argentine warships over a large area. It would also reveal that whilst the public warnings and ROE changes for the MEZ and TEZ[1] were simultaneous there was a delay until 7 May before the appropriate warning was issued for the 2 May change.

3. I therefore recommend that we should avoid these difficulties by providing the Committee with a more general narrative, explaining broadly when changes were made to ROE, but emphasising that changes were a continual and routine process, thus confirming the thrust of Mr Pym's evidence. I attach a draft on these lines. Since it does not actually specify any ROEs it would pose no problems from a security point of view. It is consistent with previous public statements by Ministers and others, including Admiral Woodward, about the change of ROE which led to the sinking of the Belgrano. The draft deliberately avoids any reference to the underlying system of ROEs or the mechanism for their approval, since neither aspect was touched on by Mr Spearing... *illegible*... prior to her[2] departure for Brazil on Wednesday 11 July. If the Minister(AF)[3] is content to clear the attached draft by that stage then Lady Young will submit it together with the other notes. If clearance by Tuesday evening 10 July is not possible it will be necessary for MOD to submit the note direct to the FAC; you will see that the Clerk to the Committee has in any case asked for receipt of material by 13 July. The FCO are quite content for MOD to submit direct if necessary.

'CONFIDENTIAL'

(signed)
J M LEGGE
Head of DS11
MB9326 3276MB

1. Maritime Exclusion Zone (declared 7 April 1982, referring to ships only) and Total Exclusion Zone (declared on 30 April, referring to ships and aircraft).
2. Lady Young, the Foreign Office minister.
3. Minister for the Armed Forces, John Stanley.

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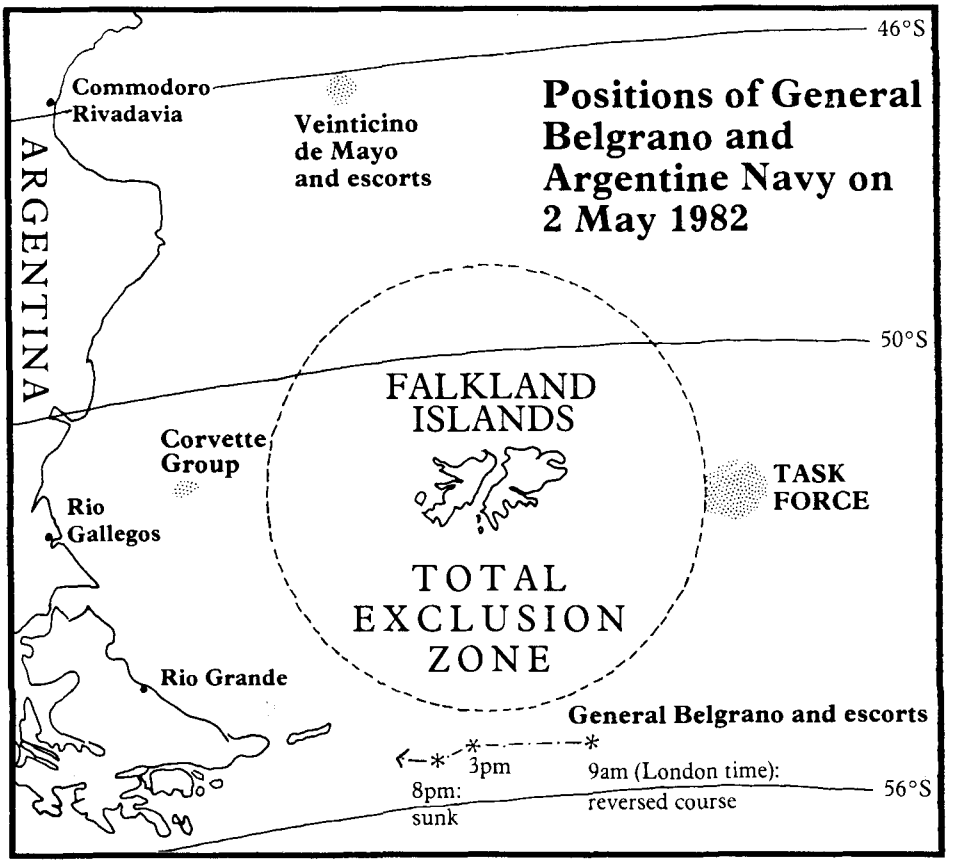

attack any Argentine ship or aircraft if it 'posed a threat' to the task force. As is well known, the *Belgrano* was sunk while sailing back to Argentina, away from the Falkland Islands. There was in fact no substantive and direct threat to the task force from the Argentine surface ships.

The secrets behind the *Belgrano* sinking have emerged, ironically, after Pym himself gave evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs in June this year. He revealed that there had been 'many changes' in the Rules of Engagement; the Select Committee then asked the Defence Ministry for more information. This led to the creation of some of the documents which have now leaked.

ONE WELL-PLACED political source has already revealed to Tam Dalyell that a Polaris submarine was sent to the South Atlantic. Dalyell was informed that the submarine went as far south as Ascension; the likely target for a threatened or demonstration nuclear attack was said to be Cordoba, northern Argentina. The nuclear threat might have been used if any of the task force's capital ships — one of the carriers, or the troop ship *Canberra* — had been destroyed in a missile attack. The Polaris deployment was said to have been ordered in the wake of the sinking of HMS *Sheffield*, after ministers had to confront the possibility that Argentine air superiority and Exocet missiles could mean the military defeat of the British task force, and the rapid political extinction of the Thatcher government.

The *New Statesman* has been able to confirm that a Polaris submarine was indeed deployed to this position. Details of the deployment are given in a series of highly classified telegrams sent to the British Embassy in Washington. While these and other telegrams were exchanged, the Cabinet Office circulated another document assessing the likely cost in human lives for each military option in the Falklands war.

In this ministerial briefing, the war planners laid out the likely costs in British lives and money of different military options. The course of action selected — which did not of course involve the use of the nuclear weapons — was expected to produce a British casualty toll of 500-1000 dead — as against the 255 actually killed.

We have attempted to contact Mr Pym and Sir Michael Havers for their comments on these revelations. Both men are on holiday, and could not be reached. The Prime Minister's office and Defence Ministry have refused to make any comment.

The immense significance of the action now revealed is that the orders to attack the *Veinticinco de Mayo* were given the day *before* Foreign Secretary Francis Pym flew to Washington to continue peace discussions with the Americans. Having decided on 30 April to back military desires for a quick and bloody solution, the War Cabinet were apparently nonetheless content to leave the Americans in ignorance of what was about to happen in the South Atlantic. ▷

Michael Havers (left) and Francis Pym: didn't want sinkings

2. The letter Heseltine never sent

(The letter was drafted by Ministry of Defence officials as a response to a letter that Tam Dalyell had written to Michael Heseltine in March 1984 (followed by a reminder on 1 May). We have inserted Dalyell's questions in italics. Dalyell only received the first page of the letter, leaving questions after number 6 unanswered.)

Tam Dalyell MP
House of Commons (undated)

(Dear Tam,)
Thank you for your letter of 1 May about the sinking of the General Belgrano. As you know, the Prime Minister has already written to Denzil Davies setting out the background to the sinking of the Belgrano and the reasons why that decision was taken. Perhaps I could reply to your more detailed questions about the events as you have set them out.

1. *(At what time on 30 April did HMS Conqueror first detect the Belgrano on its sonar?)*
As the Prime Minister has pointed out, HMS Conqueror did not detect the General Belgrano on its sonar on 30 April 1982; it made contact with an accompanying oiler auxiliary.

2&3. *(At what time did HMS Conqueror come into visual contact on 2 May 1982, and what was the course and speed of the Belgrano at the time? At what time on 2 May did HMS Conqueror first observe the RAS (Refueling At Sea) of the Belgrano, and what was its course, speed and position at the time?)*
Again as the Prime Minister has already said, the first visual contact with the Belgrano was at 2pm London time on 1 May. At the time Belgrano was conducting a RAS with the oiler. The position at 3pm London time was 54.07S 064.24W — Course 125, Speed 8 knots.

4. *(What was the course followed by the Belgrano throughout the period it was being followed by HMS Conqueror?)*
There is no continuous log of the Belgrano's movements but its position is known at certain times:

London time 2 May	*Position*	*Course*	*Speed (knots)*
5am	55.20S 060.14W	090	13
9am	55.20S 057.22W	reversed course	—
3pm	55.16S 060.18W	270	14
8pm	55.27S 061.25W	280	11

5. *(What was its speed when it was attacked?)*
11 knots.

6. *(Why were Mark 8 torpedoes used in preference to Mark 24s? Can both of these weapons be set for proximity detonation?)*
This was an operational decision taken by the CO of HMS Conqueror. He chose the Mk 8 torpedo because he considered it to have a better chance of penetrating the cruiser's armour and... *(end of first page of leaked draft).*

7. *(At what time was the order to sink the Belgrano sent from Northwood on 2 May? Were any signals sent or received by HMS Conqueror between the issuing of that order and its execution?)*

8. *(When did HMS Splendid first detect the Argentine aircraft carrier on 1 May? For how long did it maintain contact and what was the course and speed of the aircraft carrier during this time?)*

9. *(Was the aircraft carrier under surveillance by aircraft or satellite at any time between 30 April and 2 May? If so, what information concerning course, speed and signal exchanges was obtained during this period?)*

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The attempt to attack the *Veinticinco de Mayo* took place *before* any Argentine units attempted to attack the British task force, confirming that subsequent government references to a so-called 'pincer attack' — closing on the task force from opposite directions — are irrelevant. The first and only Argentine Navy attacks on the task force were provoked by British raids on Port Stanley on 1 May. The leaked documents also show that the Royal Navy was authorised, on the day of the *Belgrano* sinking, to attack *any* Argentine ship; the order was not limited to warships allegedly preparing to attack the task force.

This is the timetable for the critical events of April and May 1982.

30 April: Task force is approaching the Falklands from the east, and the nuclear submarines HMS *Conqueror* and HMS *Splendid* search for the *Belgrano* and the *Veinticinco de Mayo*. The Total Exclusion Zone is defined and announced — but the government decides to go on to a full scale attack, without telling Washington or announcing to Argentina that they intend offensive military action outside the Falklands exclusion zone.
Cabinet authorises HMS *Splendid* to sink the *Veinticinco de Mayo*, and orders Vulcan bomber raid on Port Stanley, mounted from Ascension Island.

1 May: (Morning) Vulcan and Harrier bombing raids start on Port Stanley. Cluster bombs used by the aircraft cause heavy loss of life but are not intended to destroy the runway, as publicly claimed. HMS *Conqueror* confirms by visual sighting that it has found the *Belgrano*. British military commanders ask for permission to sink any or all Argentine Navy units — not just the *Veinticinco de Mayo*.
(Afternoon) Francis Pym flies to Washington to meet Haig. Before he goes, he signs the minute warning Mrs Thatcher that their planned action may be illegal. Argentine Navy order the *Veinticinco de Mayo* and another task group to attack the British Task Force. Royal Navy frigates bombard Port Stanley, using weapons intended to cause maximum casualties.
(Evening) All Argentine Navy units ordered to break off and withdraw to port. The contents of the signal are, it is clear, known to the government and the task force.

2 May: (Morning) *Belgrano* reverses course at 9am London time. British attacks on Port Stanley continue.
(Lunchtime) War cabinet meeting at Chequers orders attacks on *all* Argentine ships, wherever located.
(Evening) *Belgrano* sunk at 8pm; 368 killed.

THE FIRST document published here, classified 'Confidential', describes most of the key events involved in changing the 'Rules Of Engagement'. It also explains why the government has so determinedly covered-up the *Belgrano* affair. Rules of Engagement (ROE) are orders to naval commanders and others about when, how, and in what conditions they are permitted to attack enemy units. Because of the particular difficulties of staying in moment-to-moment contact with a fast changing battle, and submarines in particular, the ROE are intended to define the limits within which military action is politically permitted or desired. During the Falklands War, the major changes in the ROE were entirely the responsibility of Mrs Thatcher and her advisers.

Continued on page 14

TOURIST INDUSTRY

BLACKPOOL BEACHED

Kevin Sutcliffe returned to the 'golden beaches' of his youth, to find only sewage, slot machines – and a high myeloma rate

BLACKPOOL, 'Built for Fun', proclaims the glossy brochure you get free at the Tourist Information Office. It continues boastfully: 'Millions of pounds have been spent to provide a sparkling array of new attractions . . . the tatty freak shows and bazaars have long gone.'

A new season. A new image. The same hard sell. In Blackpool the face of fun has to be seen to change constantly. Over the past decade the town's centre has undergone radical cosmetic surgery to purge itself of the shanty town image that for so long found favour with the vast captive market of Lancashire mill workers.

Big business has moved in. Visitors are now herded round a succession of multi-million pound shopping precincts and sanitised seafront 'leisure' centres which offer little more excitement than a donkey ride on the beach once did, but at considerably more expense.

The buildings may have changed, but as the six million people who visit the resort every year, spending upwards of £213 million and employing a quarter of the town's 151,000 inhabitants, quickly find out, Blackpool is run by the same entrepreneurial values espoused by the town's founding fathers. 'A good week in Blackpool is one when it pisses it down,' confides a money-collector in a garish promenade arcade. 'It keeps the punters off the beach and forces them to come in here and spend money.'

For Blackpudlians, the end of The Illuminations, 'The Greatest Free Show on Earth', (paid for by a £300,000 rates levy) signifies in the town's annual half yearly closure in early October. Then the unemployment rate shoots up to 17 per cent. Then, too, locals, who rarely use the town centre in summer because of the crowds, are deprived of a wide range of seasonal facilities.

'The priority here is for the tourist industry', asserts Ivan Taylor, leader of the Labour opposition on Blackpool Borough Council. 'Local residents are treated bloody awfully by their council. Our amenities for housing, transport, cleansing and the provision for the young are pathetic'.

And there is little sign of a change in the near future. Ivan Taylor is one of only a handful of Labour representatives in a town that has never elected a Labour administration to power. Consolidating Blackpool's political insulation are the Conservative-dominated borough councils of Wyre in the north, which covers Fleetwood, and Fylde in the south centring on Lytham St Annes. Its local paper is the rampantly pro-Tory *West Lancashire Evening Gazette*, which has a virtual monopoly along the coast. Its two parliamentary seats both return Tories with safe majorities.

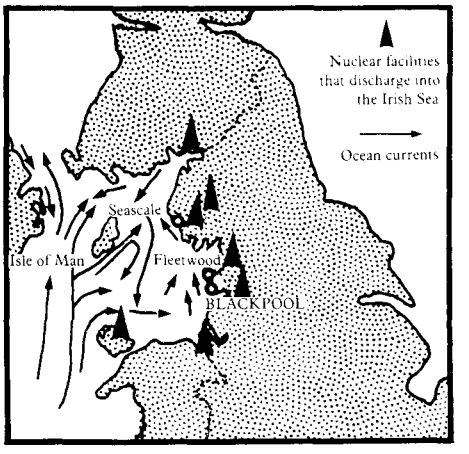
It is a combination which, over the years, has engendered a fierce parochial adherence to the dictates of private enterprise among the upwardly aspiring guest house and small businessowners who wield a considerable influence in the town. Some like Colin Hanson, the owner of a rock factory, also serve on the council. He is Chairman of the Tourism Committee: 'Most Blackpudlians are involved in the tourist industry to some degree, they accept it as an integral part of the town.'

Labour Councillor John Pouncy believes that the Conservatives maintain power 'on a massive sleeping vote' and disagrees with the offical view on the benefits of tourism for working people:

'Most of the service industry workers are notoriously low paid and only 12 per cent of locals earn wages from tourism. It is the hoteliers, shop keepers and big business that gain, while locals have to pay higher rates, food prices etc . . . and find that many of the facilities are located for the convenience of the tourists.'

But in business circles, the tourism industry dominates and Blackpool council is quick to dispel any fears that may affect its smooth running. One rumour that has persisted over many years is that the Irish Sea off Blackpool is badly polluted by the town's sewage. You will find few residents who swim off their beaches and a growing number forbid their children even to play on the beach, disbelieving the council's assurance that the treated sewage is harmless.

'Is it any wonder?' asks John Pouncy, whose children are forbidden to use the beaches. 'At low tide Blackpool has seven "golden miles" of sludge, mud and filth. At high water you can see — and smell — the effluent being discharged at the north of the town.'



Nuclear facilities (running from north to south) situated at: Chapel Cross (Scotland), Calder Hall, Sellafield, Heysham, Spring fields, Capenhurst and Wylfa (Wales)

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Blackpool Gazette & Herald

Garish promenade arcade: 'Rain keeps the punters off the beach and forces them to come in here and spend money'

A recent EEC survey of the community's beaches found that Britain had some of the filthiest stretches of sand in Europe. Happily for Blackpool, its 'golden miles' were not defined as bathing beaches because, said the Department of Environment, they did not fulfil the criterion of 1,500 people in the water in a designated 'stretch'. Blackpool's beaches were sub-divided into small stretches.

As long as there is no bad publicity about the sea and sand the Blackpool tourist industry is not too concerned, especially as the seaside is no longer the town's star attraction. It is budgeted for accordingly; monitoring the quality of the seawater is only undertaken in the season. 'We endeavour to maintain high standards within economic limitations' said Blackpool's Director of Health and Environment, Mr Brian Parker. The Town Clerk's office was equally unforthcoming. 'The sea is not our responsibility. Try the North West Water Authority.'

IT IS this 'out of sight out of mind' attitude to non-profitable municipal chores that many find typical of the town. Continual Conservative rule, dependence on the inexorable tide of tourists and poor unionisation in the service industries have taken their toll. No Left political groups flourish. Tnere are no effective campaigning environmental groups in the area. Resistance and outrage have long since been eroded, manifesting themselves as little more than dry Lancashire fatalism and acerbic wit.

The price they pay is an increasing domination of the town by London-based leisure conglomerates, such as the Coral Leisure Group, itself owned by Bass plc, the brewery conglomerate. And despite fears that the town is becoming too dependent on such companies, the council has just embarked on the construction of a £12 million private leisure centre — acting as a financial guarantor of the projects' backers, leisure and building conglomerate Techno-Sunley.

Once in the town, keeping companies sweet places the council in a precarious position best illustrated by its financial arrangements with impresario Bernard Delfont's First Leisure Corporation. First Leisure owns the three piers, Tower Buildings and the Winter Gardens Theatre. The council pays First Leisure £400,000 to provide free conference facilities at the Winter Gardens, the 'understanding' being that if the council did not pay the money, First Leisure would close the complex and Blackpool would lose the massive conference trade and its attendant prestige.

THE COUNCIL's ability to defuse any potential threat to the tourist industry is currently undergoing its severest test to date with the revelation that the Fylde coast has a significantly higher than the national average incidence for the cancer Myeloma. Expected incidence is 3.5 cases per 100,000 head of population per year. Blackpool has recorded 40 cases over the past 20 months where 6 to 10 cases should have been expected. The only known cause of Myeloma is radiation and with Sellafield less than 50 miles up the coast the equations look ominous.

Dr Anthony Irving, a specialist in community medicine for the Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde Health Authority, set out the two most vaunted causes of the high incidence of Myeloma:

- The daily pumping of a million gallons of radioactive effluent into the Irish Sea from Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant which has led to continuous pollution of the Fylde coast.
- The 1957 stack fire at Windscale (as Sellafield was previously called), which over a period of days released a radioactive cloud containing large amounts of Polonium (an alpha-numeric carcinogen) and settled on the Fylde in its south-easterly course across England.

In his paper 'Radioactivity and Disease — Blackpool, Wyre and Fylde', presented to Wyre Borough Council's Health Committee in January this year, Dr Irving debunks both theories. He maintains that exhaustive dust tests and the sea water analysis of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food show no proof of the continuous pollution of the Fylde coast from Sellafield. The cloud theory falls down, he maintains, because the outbreak of Myeloma is confined to a small area of the Wyre north of Blackpool; cloud-borne pollution should have produced a rise in the incidence of Myeloma or other radiation-related diseases across the Fylde. And, he says, 60 per cent of those people who have Myeloma did not live in the area in 1957. Irving concludes that the high incidence of Myeloma is a 'statistical anomaly'.

His findings have been accepted unequivocally by the officers of three Tory councils his health area covers. No one in official circles feels Dr Irving's independence is qualified by his belief that nuclear power should satisfy all future energy requirements, or his membership of the British Nuclear Fuels Ltd (BNFL) liaison committee at Springfields near Preston. (Most of his research was carried out with the technical assistance of BNFL, who have used his findings as part of their publicity campaigns.)

A dissenting and less publicised opinion than that of Dr Irving comes from Dr Nick Howorth — a chemical pathologist at Victoria General Hospital in Blackpool who has been involved in a five year test that originally diagnosed the high incidence of Myeloma. In his view the 1957 fire was very much a candidate for the cause of the Myeloma. He disagrees with Dr Irving's claims, saying that the incidence of Myeloma *is* spread throughout the Fylde consistent with a cooling, settling radioactive cloud. And he refutes Dr Irving's assertion that most of the sufferers of Myeloma are not local. He thought investigators should keep an open mind on the incidence and cause of the Myeloma: monitoring of the atmosphere at Sellafield did not begin until 1964.

At the meeting of the Wyre Health Committee last January, Dr Irving was one of three 'experts' who spoke about radiation in the Fylde. The others were Dr S.R. Jones from BNFL and Dr G.J. Hunt from the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food, the author of *Radioactivity in the Surface and Coastal Waters of the British Isles*. They had been brought together by Wyre's Director of Health and Environment, Ken Emery, to discuss, among other things, Dr Hunt's assertion in his book that the caesium levels in plaice caught at Fleetwood in 1981 were the same as for plaice caught at Sellafield 40 miles to the north. Within days of his report being published sales of Fleetwood fish plummeted threatening the town's already ailing fishing industry.

The meeting started tensely, with local reporters being quizzed by BNFL press officers as to their journalistic intentions and Friends of the Earth being denied access to the platform. Dr Hunt defended his fish findings and forwarded the theory that reduced river flow due to drought that year had meant the radioactive effluent had not been sufficently diluted and the fish had got a higher than 'normal' dose.

With that said, the committee retired and Mr Emery, the Health and Environment Director,

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pronounced the meeting 'a balanced, worthwile exercise that reassured the public.' 'We won't be having another in the near future,' he said.

However, it left one important question in the minds of many present. Do we really have to depend on heavy rainfall to keep radiation levels low? And what of this year's drought? Will it mean that fish will have a higher than 'normal' dose of radiation, increasing the risk of cancer in cancer-susceptible people who eat a lot of fish? I put these questions to Mr Emery, suggesting that public confidence would have been better served with a more open meeting.

'I don't like the way this interview is going,' he said sharply, and turned my tape recorder off. He continued: 'There are so many self-appointed experts, where do you draw the line? I have my job to think of.'

Fylde Borough Health Committee spent 45 minutes discussing BNFL operations at Sellafield and Springfields, where uranium rods for nuclear power stations are manufactured. 'Even though Sellafield effluent is washed down past Blackpool, the meeting's attitude was that we should leave the explanations to Dr Irving and the accredited experts', says Independent Councillor Sydney Boss who sits on the Fylde's Health Committee. The committee eventually passed a motion expressing its 'unease' with the present situation. Apart from tourism, their reluctance to be more outspoken stems from the fact that BNFL Springfields is one of the biggest employers and ratepayers in the area.

But however shallow and unbalanced these meetings seem, they appear models of open government compared to Blackpool's hard-faced inactivity on the subject. 'People in Blackpool are just too busy to think about things like that,' assured Councillor Henry Mitchell, Chairman of the town's Health and Safety Committee. 'Everyone here is too geared up for the season to bother. If there were any problems I expect the experts would have it all in hand'.

In reality, Blackpool council has done nothing. I was given a press briefing — specially typed for me — about Blackpool's attitude to radioactivity and sewage. But with Ivan Taylor's revelation that neither Sellafield nor the incidence of Myeloma have ever been discussed at committee level or full council, it cannot be regarded as a statement reflecting considered council policy.

It was left to Ray Lawrence, Secretary of the Blackpool Hotel and Guest House Association, which represents over 2,000 hoteliers to articulate the Blackpool position at its most raw: 'If positive evidence ever came out that this coast was polluted by radioactive effluent it would kill this town and most of the West coast of Britain. Now, I don't know the facts, but hopefully if it keeps up that end of the country we will have no problems. Perhaps the people who would normally go to the Cumbrian coast will come to Blackpool instead.'

The irony for Blackpool Borough Council is that the town will have an open debate about the nuclear industry. In October the town plays host to the annual Labour Party Conference at which the National Union of Seamen will put a comprehensive motion advising an end to the dumping of nuclear waste at sea and reducing to zero the discharges from Sellafield. The conference will be televised and is being held, at the ratepayers' expense, in the Winter Gardens. □

TRADE UNIONS

On second fronts and allied commands

In the first of two articles on issues facing the September TUC, John McIlroy describes the NUM's dilemma in wanting both absolute independence and committed support

WEEK 24 and the battleground of the miners' strike shifts to the TUC Congress at Brighton. Proceedings will be dominated by the attempt of the Left to carry a three-point programme which, if acted on, would bring the country to a standstill. Delegates will be asked to vote for a levy on all members to produce £1m a week for the NUM; to urge all trade unionists not to cross miners' picket lines or handle coal or coke delivered by non-trade unionists; and to instruct the General Council to call a 24-hour General Strike against pit closures.

The move represents a new and crucial stage in Britain's longest large-scale post-war strike. It is dictated by two factors: the depressing state of NUM funds and the continuing free movement of coal, coke and iron ore. The NUM leadership is now addressing the fact that after five long months it has failed to carry the strike outside the pits.

On 26 March, as the stoppage began to take root, NUM General Secretary Peter Heathfield got in touch with Len Murray. His letter was to the point: having carried out its obligation to notify Congress House of the strike his union was 'not requesting an intervention or assistance from the TUC. The miners' 'go it alone' stance was influenced by memories of the 1926 'betrayal' and the ability of the NUM to carry the field independently in 1972 and 1974. More immediately, the NGA dispute with Eddie Shah has stranded the TUC apparatus and General Council. Arthur Scargill and Heathfield had no intention of handing the running of their dispute over to Len Murray.

The NUM leaders gambled successfully on bringing out the vast majority of their members without a national ballot. They gambled unsuccessfully on picketing out Nottinghamshire and moving out of the mines to endgame by mass picketing steel, the ports and the power stations. The scale of the police operation played a part, of course. But so did sectionalism, the impact of the recession and fears of unemployment among other groups of workers who could anyway point to the fact that the stoppage was not 100 per cent solid. Active *industrial* support from other trade unionists — as opposed to the general financial and moral support — has been the Achilles' heel of the strike.

Hostility could be expected from the right-wing union leaders. They dislike Arthur Scargill's politics and popularity — in that order. By early May EETPU leader Eric Hammond was using his union's electricity supply conference to support the working Nottinghamshire miners, label the NUM executive 'donkeys' and 'nursery revolutionaries' and strongly warn against an extension of the dispute to the power stations. Alistair Graham's perhaps only success at the CPSA Conference was to convince the delegates of the dangers of solidarity action with the miners.

Soon after John Lyons of the Engineers and Managers Association refused to meet Heathfield on behalf of the joint union council in electricity supply because of the NUM attempts to block coal supplies to the power stations. Mr Lyons found the miners 'attitude towards this industry and the unions in it unacceptable'. The end of May found Arthur Scargill writing to ISTC chief Bill Sirs: 'Throughout this dispute the attitude you have displayed has been diabolical and in violation of every principle understood and accepted by the trade union and Labour movement'.

If Bill Sirs' determination to accept coal from any source was unsurprising far more was expected from the left-led unions, particularly the transport workers and the railway unions. But railway workers are alone in showing support *can* be won. Only at Shirebrook and Westhouses in the Midlands is coal still being ferried from the pits to the power stations, and there only a minority are operating coal trains. In some areas, railway workers who have been suspended are living cheek by jowl with miners still going to work.

Nonetheless, all the steel plants are still being supplied by road. Workers at the two firms involved in legal action against the S. Wales NUM belong to the TGWU and to the United Road Transport Union. The TGWU's attempts to expel scabbing members were answered with the threat of legal action. In Wales over 40 TGWU drivers are facing disciplinary action. In the North West the Region Six Committee has circulated all branches stating that it is TGWU policy not to cross picket lines and that infractions should be immediately reported so that disciplinary proceedings can begin. Action is being taken against a Wigan branch crossing picket lines at open cast mines, which are still working.

In other areas the union's stance has been less firm. When South Yorkshire miners sent the Grimsby office a list of around 30 union-organised firms crossing the picket lines, a letter despatched from the TGWU offices simply asked the companies to refrain from carrying coal in future.

Some of the 800,000 tons of imported coal estimated to be arriving at the ports outside the

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National Docks Labour Board Scheme is also being handled by TGWU members notably at Groves Wharf and Mistley. At Port Talbot members of the Blastfurnacemen's Union operate the cranes that shift iron ore from the ships but TGWU members prepare it for transfer. TWGU officials agree on the need to tighten up on activities which undermine the miners' efforts, but say they lack the authority to enforce it.

Alongside the turmoil in the pits, the normal rhythms of trade unionism go on. The power, gas, water and postal workers are among others in the public sector who have settled their claims within the real inflation rate since March. Far from vigorous attempts to take advantage of an embattled government paymaster, other unions have drawn back from the brink of turning the dispute into a general industrial confrontation with a supposedly hated Tory government.

The two week docks' stoppage did give a brief surge of hope to the NUM. But it was in the end about the Dock Labour Board Scheme not about pit closures. Far from opening the long awaited second front against Thatcher, it illustrated once more the strengths and limitations of solidarity. The dockers *were* prepared to defend their own job security and boycott certain work to help the miners. They were *not* prepared to take their livelihood in their hands and strike to support them.

By the second week of July the hope of a second front looked very remote. An additional pressing problem was finance. The NUM's General Fund was under £5m in March but the individual areas have their own funds — Yorkshire's last year, for example, was £7m. However, with no subscription income the union has been spending £115,000 weekly on administration. Major outgoings are the cost of picketing and hardship grants to the worst hit areas. Over £5 million has been raised in donations, but it was reported in July that the union could only continue at the existing level for another 12 weeks.

With Congress looming there was a turn to the TUC. So far its involvement had been negative. Len Murray had intervened to warn the regional TUC in Humberside and Wales that they had no powers to support the regional Days of Action on 21 May and 12 June. Otherwise, 20 weeks of the most important dispute involving British unions since 1926 has meant 20 weeks of silence from Great Russell Street. At the 23 July General Council a rapprochement began as Mick McGahey responded favourably to statements (allegedly stimulated by David Basnett) that the TUC was willing to discuss wider support. TUC General Secretary designate Norman Willis and TUC Chair Ray Buckton met Scargill and Heathfield in Sheffield on 27 July. (The venue was significant.) The possibility of financial aid was discussed but the NUM representatives emphasised that the direction of the dispute must remain in their hands.

FOR THE MINERS this is a *sine qua non*. Minimally TUC help will at least improve their financial position. Optimally it could help in escalating the dispute. But they are determined to avoid what they still see as the restrictive vice of the General Council. Therefore, despite further informal contacts, they decided not to request official support from Congress House but to wait and place their resolution directly before Congress.

It will be an uphill battle against opposition from the right. A 10p per person levy could place tremendous strains on the already stretched finances of unions suffering membership loss. In some unions the response has been excellent. But in NALGO a rank-and-file revolt has led to a special conference on the issue; GMBATU officials feel their £1,000 per day donation is the limit. In the CPSA there have been resignations.

There can be little doubt that a majority on the General Council supports the Neil Kinnock view that the dispute should not be extended. But TUC involvement may strengthen moves towards a compromise settlement with Stan Orme cast as a Kissingerian shuttle. If the resolutions are successful they may give the TUC added leverage while not extending the strike.

But for the NUM it is difficult to see how a compromise can mean anything but a defeat. A weakened and divided union will still face a major programme of closures. Crucially that will mean a government strengthened in political authority. And that means big problems for the rest of the unions. □

DRUGS

Heroin hoax

It is the sensationalist approach to heroin that deprives the addict of hope, says Jock Young

IF THE NEWS is to be believed, we are only a short step from Sodom and Gomorrah. In May the London Borough of Islington produced a well-thought-out report on the problem of heroin use in their area. They hazarded an estimate of 15 per cent of young males as being regular users. By the time *Thames Television News* got hold of the report it had become 'under 40 per cent' in their headlines and 'nearly half' of all young people in Islington in the news story itself.

Hardly surprising, given that the *Sunday Times* (8 April) had informed us that the 'majority', i.e over 50 per cent of kids in South East London estates were experimenting with heroin and that Dr Martin Plant, 'Scotland's foremost authority on drug addiction', had said that 'heroin is being handed out like Smarties'. This would mean the Angel of Islington had a higher use of heroin than Harlem and Clapham High Road more street hustling than the Bronx.

In reality, there are no hard facts on the rate of heroin use in Britain. We are in the middle of a second moral panic about heroin; in both instances in 1968 and 1984 real rises in use occurred but they were grossly overestimated, standing as a metapher for society's sickness. Fifteen years ago the panic created the 'cures' for addiction which have contributed to our present predicament. We seem set to repeat these mistakes.

On the recent Miriam Stoppard programme 'Where There's Life' (11 July YTV) I was confronted by mothers and relatives of addicts whose anguish was immense. 'Where are the places that our kids can be cured in?', they asked. 'Why are there not sufficient funds for medical treatment?' It would have been easy to reply that this was just another example of the cuts; but this is not the point.

In fact medical units are extremely ineffective at getting people off heroin — and in some cases they make matters worse. Medical intervention, outside of the two weeks necessary for physical withdrawal from the drug, is not a solution. The problem is less weaning people off heroin than stopping them starting up again.

One mother of a teenager suffering from severe hepatitis after yet another failed 'cure' said she had thought all along that more doctors were the answer. They had obviously not been: 'but how if we had made that mistake in 1968 were we being allowed to make it again now?' Significantly the programme's two stories of success — a teenager from Liverpool and the community activists on a Dublin estate — were stories of changes in social or political circumstances.

The prevalent image of heroin is like a booby trap. First, it portrays heroin as an addictive drug of gothic proportions. A few snorts and you are hooked for the rest of your brief and unrelievedly wretched life. But in reality, the smoker discovers that he or she is *not* immediately addicted and that heroin is a pleasurable and exciting substance.

Then the second mechanism of the trap springs into action. For, after a while, physical dependence *does* ensue, evoking the most insidious of the misinformation. For heroin addiction is caricatured as terrible degenerative disease, rather like tuberculosis. Burdened with the belief that they are suffering from a near-incurable illness, it is hardly surprising that the majority of addicts follow predictions and relapse. It confirms that they are sick and helpless, part of society's rot.

In the inner cities there is a whole generation who may never find regular employment. The days are long, tedious, poverty-stricken and pointless. Drugs are exciting and enjoyable and hustling them gives life some small measure of purpose.

TO DEAL realistically with the problem demands two levels of strategy: first, to stem the supply of heroin in and around the country; second, to deal constructively with heroin use at grass roots level. Over 90 per cent of heroin seizures occur at ports of entry. An effective Customs force — the front line of defence for the inner city communities — is essential. Here the law and order rhetoric of the present government must be judged by the cut of a thousand Customs staff.

Until 1968 everyone was stopped at Customs, then this was reduced to a third; it is now at a level of 1 per cent stops falling to 0.3 per cent at peak hours. The would-be drug smuggler, as Norrie Phillips of the Dover

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branch of the Customs officers' union put it, 'must be killing himself laughing.'

Secondly, let us demand in unequivocal terms that the police do their job. Why is it that virtually everyone in a community who is concerned with drugs knows precisely who the dealers are, where they live and their times of business yet the police do nothing? As Walter Easey of the Camden Police Subcommittee — himself an ex-Hong Kong drugs officer — put it: 'To arrest a dealer is as easy as arresting an unregistered hot dog seller. They both have, of necessity, to be public and in the market place'.

To make this demand does not involve agreeing with draconian penalties for small-time dealers. As these individuals are also invariably the heavy users this would be both unjust and counterproductive.

Lastly, on the level of control, the panic creates the demand that more money be thrown at the problem in the hope that paid experts will make it disappear. Yet the clinic system has been shown to be a disaster. In Stimson and Oppenheim's painstaking follow-up study of the clinics, 38 per cent of opiate addicts had given up after ten years and most of these because of the changed circumstances of their lives. The same proportion remained attending the clinic and regularly receiving prescriptions: fixated by their notion of suffering from an illness.

Despite this, the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs both in their 1982 *Treatment and Rehabilitation* and in the report *Prevention*, released recently, continue — against pressure from a minority group within their ranks — to emphasise the medical model and the central role of the professional in the treatment of addiction.

If addiction is a loss of free choice, it is because the addict is trapped in a seemingly inescapable predicament. In Vietnam almost one half of the GIs used heroin, and 20 per cent felt themselves to be addicted. But a rigorous follow-up showed that only 7 per cent continued to use while only 1 per cent felt themselves to be addicted. The heroin users had returned home from an environment they loathed. Our street addicts remain trapped in their circumstances.

As has been shown in a wide variety of situations — from the community activist of Dublin to the Black Muslims in Detroit — the effective control of heroin use demands an intervention at a social and political level. It must present young people with the hope that they can change their circumstances and involve them in that process of change. Local political activists would do better encouraging communities where heroin dealing and use is high to organise — with police and doctors playing their limited and specific role — rather than compounding the helplessness of addicts and their relatives by shutting them away in clinics.

The Conservatives are not genuinely interested in problems of crime as it affects working-class people. There is no shortage of grassroots support in the fight against heroin both from parents and the kids themselves. Labour must have a realistic policy in the drugs field which, while firmly rejecting panic measures, relates to the genuine concern within working-class communities over the threat of hard drug use. □

Continued from page 10

The second document published this week — a draft letter prepared for Defence Secretary Heseltine — gives precise details of the movements of the *Belgrano* (see p.9). A third document sent to Mr Dalyell was not official but an anonymous typed letter suggesting that Dalyell ask specific questions about the Rules of Engagement. It is not known whether that letter is linked to the documents leaked to the MP.

Confirmation of the change in the Rules of Engagement and the attack on the aircraft carrier is contained in the personal diary of one of HMS *Conqueror*'s officers, a copy of which was passed to and used by the BBC programme *Panorama* in May this year. The diaries have since been confirmed as authentic. The passages quoted here were not then noted or broadcast, as no-one then realised the significance of the references to the aircraft carrier.

On 30 April, after noting that faint sonar traces, probably from the *Belgrano* and its escorts, had been detected, the HMS *Conqueror* officer wrote:

> The calm before the storm! In the evening we received a signal stating that HM government has decided to 'use more military force' and has authorised the destruction of the Argentinian CVA (ie, aircraft carrier) VEINTICINCO DE MAYO — it would be great if she went down on the 25th of May!!
> In fact she is in SPLENDID's area and so it looks as though the S-Boat (ie, *Swiftsure* class submarine) will have her.

On 1 May the *Conqueror* officer gave extensive details of the following of the *Belgrano*, and added a reference to the aircraft carrier which clearly indicated that he knew the other submarine was trying to sink it.

> No news of the CVA yet so we presume it is still floating.

If during the next few weeks the government now admits the attempted attack on the *Veinticinco de Mayo*, they will argue — as they have done with the *Belgrano* — that the carrier had become a threat to the task force. This will be untrue; it was only on 1 May, a day later, and after aircraft and ships bombarded Port Stanley airfield, that Argentina ordered the aircraft carrier and another group of ships (not the *Belgrano* group) to attack the task force. But these orders were rescinded less than five hours later, and all ships which had been ordered to attack then returned safely to port, where they remained for the duration of the war.

The documents provide final proof that Mrs Thatcher and her ministers have lied repeatedly to parliament and the public about the course of the Falklands war:

LIE 1: In the House of Commons on 4 May 1982, Defence Secretary John Nott stated that 'The heavily armed surface group (i.e., the *Belgrano* and her escorts) was closing on elements of our task force'. On the famous May 1983 BBC *Nationwide* confrontation with Mrs Diana Gould, Mrs Thatcher told viewers that 'It (the *Belgrano*) was not sailing away from the Falklands... it was a danger to our ships'.

FACT: The leaked minute confirms in detail how the *Belgrano* was known to have reversed course, hours before the sinking, and was sailing directly westwards, away from the Falklands.

LIE 2: On the same occasion, Nott said that '(on) 2 May, at 8pm London time, one of our submarines detected... the *General Belgrano*...'.

FACT: The ships known to be accompanying the *Belgrano* had first been detected two days earlier, and the *Belgrano* was tracked visually and on sonar for over 30 hours.

LIE 3: At a press conference on 3 May, and again in the House of Commons the next day, John Nott said that 'it was our policy to use minimum force'.

FACT: This was the opposite of the truth. A major and unprovoked offensive had been ordered on 30 April, and maximum force authorised on 2 April.

LIE 4: Admiral Woodward, ministers, and Mrs Thatcher — most recently in a leter to Denzil Davies MP — have repeatedly referred to the change in the Rules of Engagement as being intended to 'enable *Conqueror* to attack *Belgrano*'.

FACT: The changes in the Rules of Engagement went far wider than this statement is intended to imply.

LIE 5: Cecil Parkinson, on *Panorama* in April 1984 referring to Francis Pym's absence from the second rule-changing meeting on 2 May 1982, said 'I have no reason to believe... that he didn't agree with that decision (to attack the *Belgrano* or any Argentine Navy ship outside the exclusion zone)'.

FACT: Parkinson, who had been present at the earlier OD(SA) meeting on 30 April had every reason to suppose that Pym would not have agreed. Parkinson knew exactly what Pym's and Havers's objections to the planned sinking of the *Veinticinco de Mayo* had been; the same arguments applied with equal force to other ships.

Another significant point to emerge from the leaked documents is the key role of Defence Minister Mr John Stanley in orchestrating the *Belgrano* cover-up on behalf of Mrs Thatcher. The third document sent to Tam Dalyell MP in April correctly identifies Stanley, rather than Defence Secretary Michael Heseltine, as the Defence Ministry figure who has been determined to suppress information about the orders to attack the *Belgrano* and *Veinticinco de Mayo*.

The attack on *Veinticinco de Mayo* was launched before the US peace plan had come to an end, and the US announced immediate economic sanctions against Argentina. This, according to Dr Paul Rogers of Bradford University who has extensively analysed the course of the Falklands war, was the 'crucial piece of the economic blockade'; with the US backing Japan, the EEC and the Commonwealth, the sanctions would now bite.

On 30 April 1982, Mrs Thatcher had a unique opportunity to capitalise on international support for a peaceful settlement. But she wasn't interested; as the Belgrano Papers make abundantly clear, Mrs Thatcher was quick indeed to unleash the dogs of war, or as *Conqueror*'s officer genteelly put it, 'use more military force'. The use of nuclear weapons against Argentina was not excluded; indeed, it then became a viable option with the arrival of the first Polaris submarine. Dr Rogers comments that:

> When the government just days later told parliament and the world that they were using minimum force, they meant the opposite. They had just opted for total war. □

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DIARY

Paul Foot

Andrew Wilson's splendid scoop in the *Observer* could supply the missing link in the *General Belgrano* mystery. I've always been puzzled by the official story, that the War Lords persuaded the Prime Minister to agree to the sinking of the *Belgrano* at lunchtime on 2 May 1982, just while Foreign Secretary Pym was starting a day of negotiations in Washington. Could she really have been callous enough to give the order to sink the cruiser outside the exclusion zone at such a delicate time? The new leaks tell a different story. They say that the rules of engagement were changed to sink not just the *Belgrano*, but any Argentinian warship anywhere. In other words, the War Cabinet had before it not a specific proposition to sink a specific ship at a specific time — but a general proposition to attack any ship which might hove into view. This must have seemed quite easy to accept, and much less immediately threatening to negotiations. But the vagueness of it was deceptive. The *Belgrano* had been in *HMS Conqueror*'s sights for some 24 hours. Could it be that the Chiefs of Staff, anxious to get on with the war, bounced the War Cabinet into an apparently general change in the rules of engagement which would enable them specifically to sink the *Belgrano* as soon as the peace negotiations threatened to succeed?

○

'Not since Peterloo', said Shirley Williams in her statement on the murder of Sean Downes by the Royal Uster Constabulary, 'have British police shot anyone dead at a peaceful meeting'. In fact, no one was shot dead at Peterloo. Eleven people were slashed or trampled to death by the yeomanry, the decent stout-hearted middle-class people of Manchester driven to fury by the sight of 60,000 trade unionists peacefully demonstrating. Even in 1819 the Tory government didn't dare arm the yeomanry with guns. That would have been almost as barbaric as to issue a sectarian Protestant police force with plastic bullets to 'deal with' peacefully demonstrating Catholics in Belfast 165 years later.

○

Then again, Shirley Williams is not quite right on the main point. At Ackton Hall colliery, Featherstone, Yorks, almost exactly 91 years ago, two demonstrating miners were shot dead. Not by the police, it's true, but by a detachment of *heroes* from the South Staffordshire Regiment. Shirley Williams might argue that the demonstration was hardly peaceful, and in one sense she'd be right. But who caused the violence? In spite of a cruel lock-out and horrible poverty among the miners' families, there had been precious little violence in Featherstone. So safe did the mineowners feel that the local police were sent off to Doncaster to control hooligans at the races. When a couple of wagons were turned over by the pickets, the South Staffs Sharpshooters were rushed in from Bradford. Instantly, a vast demonstration gathered at the pit. It was angry, but non-violent. Then a law-and-order fanatic from the magistracy gave the order to fire live rounds into the crowd. Two dead — many injured. The government, as I'm sure Shirley Williams will remember, was Liberal. If only the SDP and David Owen had been around, I'm sure they would have been tougher.

○

The question 'who caused the violence' is not really for Shirley Williams. It's for Neil Kinnock. 'Violence', he intones, 'has no place in British trade unionism'. I hope he hasn't forgotten the turbulent history of trade unionism in his own area — the great working-class agitation around the Reform Bill in Merthyr, for instance, in 1831. And what does he think John Frost the Chartist was doing in Newport on 4 November 1839, at the head of 4,000 men armed with guns and cudgels? I remember Neil quoting his father about an unpopular strike in the valleys when Neil was a boy. Kinnock senior argued that it was precisely when the going got tough in a strike that support for it should be most unequivocal. Good advice!

○

I went to the first day of the Oval Test, but would have preferred the fourth when Michael Holding returned to his long run and shot out three top England batsmen in eleven balls. C.L.R. James wrote once that there is no sight as marvellous as a fast bowler in full flow, and for my money, Michael Holding is the greatest of them all. About a year ago, minding my own business in a Chinese restaurant, I started to study a West Indian couple eating at the next table. Could it be? Surely not? I dashed home, seized two sons and drove them, still carrying the books they were reading, to the window of the restaurant. One glance was enough. Yes, it was he! In a moment, I was standing in the restaurant blurting out to Michael Holding that he was in my humble and grovelling opinion the greatest fast bowler ever, not to say probably the most wonderful human being in the whole history of the world — proof of which was his magnificent statement on cricket in South Africa. *This is not a fantasy.* I have proof: an 'A' level edition of *Dr Faustus* signed, on the flyleaf, 'With best wishes, Michael Holding'.

○

What did Michael Holding say about South Africa, by the way? Asked about the huge sums offered by the South Africans to West Indian cricketers who agreed to play there, he said: 'We gave up being slaves a long time ago.' While we're on the subject, the big joke down here is that South East Cornwall in August is completely ruined by holidaymakers, tourists and Zolas. I leave you to work that out.

○

The chief problem down here is water. There is more rain in Devon and Cornwall than anywhere else in the country except Wales, but people here are faced with 17 hours a day without water from the first week in September. The government, like good Christians, blames God. Cornish sceptics point even higher in the firmament — to Michael Heseltine. They remember that the plans for the Roadford reservoir, introduced after the 1976 drought, were 'sat on' for two years by Heseltine when he was Secretary of State for the Environment even after his own inspector had agreed that the reservoir should be built. The only real objectors to the reservoir were the Devon farmers, who run the local Tory parties, and have a particular influence on Heseltine who was MP for Tavistock for many years before he found an altogether more convenient seat at Henley.

Even without the Roadford reservoir, there would be more than enough water if the pipes didn't leak about a quarter of it. But the Thatcher government has made sure that at least eight per cent of waterworkers have been sacked — especially those who check the pipes for leaks. For the government that's 'efficiency'. For people in Devon, Cornwall (and Manchester, and a lot of other places) it's standpipes and disease.

ROGER WODDIS

In Praise of Pros

A panel of senior judges and lawyers plans to advise the government to permit small brothels as a means of controlling prostitution.

What a beautiful place is a brothel!
How deserving of praise is a whore!
Oh, what pleasures they bring
And how wildly they swing
When they answer my ring at the door!

Oh, how odd to be bothered by bodies,
And how quaint to be quick to condemn!
We should wonder instead
At the whores of the head,
And how little is said about them.

It appears those in need of controlling
Are the girls merely marketing meat;
But that doesn't apply
To the others who lie,
And are hot for a miners' defeat.

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One-sided 'free' trade

Claudia Wright reports that the pro-Israel lobby has upped the price of its support in the Presidential elections

Washington

IN AMERICAN national elections a little political extortion has traditionally been thought to go a long way. Since World War II the Poles have regularly extracted repudiations of the Yalta agreement from Presidential candidates; the Irish, declarations of support for the unification of Ireland; the Greeks, pledges of military aid to match the Turks and of support to remove Turkish troops from Cyprus. In each of these cases, however, the extortion has been of the mild arm-twisting variety, and its value after the election approximately nil. As the ethnic communities have aged their leaders don't even receive invitations to State dinners any longer.

But with the pro-Israel lobby it is another story. Not only has the extortion required one payoff before the election and another afterwards; each election (Presidential contests every four years, Congressional elections every two) has raised the stakes so that candidates have occasionally been at a loss to know what to offer that has not already been paid.

In successive election campaigns the total amount of US aid to Israel has continued to set new records and the delivery of arms has been stepped up in time for both American politicians to mollify their constituents and for the Israeli generals to go to war. The total in US government assistance since 1949 has now reached just over $29 billion, while government-subsidised private transfers and investments from the US have totalled $16 billion.

This year Congress has voted to provide Israel with $2.6 billion from the 1985 budget, and the Israeli treasury has already announced that its opening bid for the 1986 budget will be double the figure at $5 billion. By the time the Presidential election is held on 6 November, the Reagan administration will have already had to decide how much of that to concede.

BUT ARMS and cash are no longer enough for the Israelis. Part of the reason is that Israel's war economy can neither make a profit from its conquests nor liquidate its past debts. Thus, a new type of demand has been developed for election time in the US. This is that the US economy should become a free market for Israeli exports.

The demand is that the US agrees to buy at least $200 million worth of military goods a year and provides investment funds so that Israel can build new weapons systems for sale on the international arms market. The US has been asked to drop all customs duties and tariffs on non-military goods establishing the first-ever free trade zone between the US and a trading partner. This is being negotiated at the moment under intense Israeli pressure to complete it before the election. Meanwhile a number of frightened, embarrassed US Congressmen have discovered that the profits and jobs of their constitutents may be lost if the Israelis and the Administration get their way.

So far this year, Israel's exports are up 32 per cent on last year's level, and may set a new record. The result is that the US trade surplus with Israel is shrinking. It was nearly $1.3 billion in 1981 — this year it is likely to be less than $500 million. US trade officials say European competition is to blame. In fact, it is the increase in Israeli penetration of the US market that accounts for the change. In 1981 Israeli exports to the US accounted for 22 per cent of its total trade; in 1983 this had risen to 26 per cent.

Israel already enjoys unusual advantages. In 1975 one of the payoffs by the Ford Administration was an agreement by Washington to classify Israel as a developing country so that its exports to the US could qualify for duty-free treatment. Although Israel's *per capita* income ranked well ahead of other developing countries — ahead of countries the US refused to consider eligible — the deal was struck. It has proved to be a bonanza — in 1976 Israel shipped $116 million in duty-free exports to the US; in 1983 the value had quadrupled. According to a study by the office of the US Trade Representative, less than nine per cent of Israel's current exports to the US pay any duty.

If Israel's exports to the US are growing rapidly, and only a small fraction encounter tariffs, why should the US offer what it has never given any other trading partner — a comprehensive free-trade agreement? The benefit to Israel is obvious. But even ardent pro-Israel Congressmen find it almost impossible to say what benefit it could bring the US.

US officials negotiating the agreement with the Israelis say that US exporters will be able to increase their trade with Israel. They admit, however, that the Israelis have refused as part of the bargain to lower the surcharges and levies they currently impose on imports. The free trade agreement, then, is strictly a one-sided affair.

THIS FACT has disturbed the US industries most likely to be hit by the lifting of duties. They include manufacturers of textiles, jewellery, and industrial chemicals, and agricultural producers. US rose growers have already won a case against the Israelis for illegally subsidising flowers exported to the US market and US citrus growers have also beaten efforts by the Israeli producers to win duty-free status. US officials say they have tried unsuccessully since 1979 to get the Israelis to agree to reducing their subsidies on exports.

The Congressional authority to come to an agreement with the Israelis has already expired. This means that US negotiators should not even be discussing the subject with the Israelis. The Israeli negotiators have been helped by a US mole slipping them a copy of a classified assessment of the domestic impact of the free trade proposal. Fearful of the reaction in the US, the administration has withheld this document from public release, and refuses to say how much it might cost US producers in sales lost to duty-free subsidised Israeli imports.

Representatives of US producers say they fear much more than the recent rate of growth of Israel's exports in the US market. They believe that once Portugal and Spain formally join the EEC, Israeli agricultural exports once sold in Europe will be displaced on to the US market and dumped in large quantities. The Americans are also afraid that if Israel acquires free-trade status, it will clandestinely reach agreements with other exporters who currently face US quotas and duties, to re-export their products through Israel to the US market. The suspicion is that the Israelis would use their trade advantage with the US to break economic and diplomatic boycotts imposed on them from other countries, possibly including Arab states. Greek shoe manufacturers, for example, might be lured into 'co-production' schemes with Israel.

The opposition to the free trade agreement is counting on a delay until after the elections. There is not much time before Congress rises for the elections, and in the Senate, where the pro-Israel forces have been strongest to date, only one day has been scheduled for enacting the entire agenda of trade bills. In the House of Representatives, the Israelis have tried several unsuccessful tactics and in August they invited members of the trade subcommittee to spend a week in Israel hearing their case.

No one, however, has dreamed of suggesting that US cash aid to Israel already provides the *quid pro quo* for lowering Israel's export subsidies and improving US access to Israel's market. To suggest that would be like twisting Israel's arm when the Administration is at its weakest. Given their own vulnerability US Congressmen wouldn't dare accuse Israel of extorting their support. □

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Wood gathering in Kenya

Barnaby's Picture Library

ENERGY

Woman's power

The Third World faces a fuelwood crisis. According to Phil O'Keefe and Barry Munslow, women are the key

TEN YEARS after most of the world was plunged into energy crisis by the rise in oil prices, the Third World is facing its own new crisis, created by its particular energy sources. Kenya is a case in point.

Three quarters of Kenya's energy consumption is biomass — wood, charcoal and crop residues — over half going to rural households. In Ethiopia and Tanzania, biomass consumption makes up 95 per cent of the energy budget. Even in a more developed economy, such as Zimbabwe, biomass accounts for half the energy consumption. Until recently, however, the role of fuelwood, the people's energy, was little understood.

In Kenya, 20 million tonnes of wood is consumed each year. If consumption patterns remain roughly the same, over 50 million tonnes will be required each year by 2000. The problem, however, is that only slightly more than half the current demand is from renewable wood such as branches, while over 45 per cent is obtained by destroying whole trees. It is predicted that by 1985, the bulk of wood will come from felling whole trees, which will accelerate the problem of deforestation and soil erosion. On current estimates, there will be a shortfall of wood of some 30 million tonnes (50 per cent of all energy requirements) by 2000 in Kenya.

Most forestry efforts hinder rather than help this situation. Foresters still concentrate on producing wood for industrial use although this accounts for little more than 10 per cent of total national wood demand. Educational and training programmes and development plans still reflect the country's colonial and commercial legacy; what worked on the South Downs of England remains a model for what could work in Kenya.

What foresters do not understand is that rural people do not get wood from forests. They obtain wood from hedgerows, from scrubland and from within their own farms. Moreover, they do not cut down whole trees — they cut branches from live trees, leaving them to dry for later collection. And their bush knives (pangas) cannot generally cut wood more than 12 centimetres in diameter. So wood harvesting is a local, non-destructive activity.

KENYA HAS the fastest rate of population growth in the world. Over the last 15 years, this population increase has been accommodated by rural migration, with people moving from over-occupied areas of high agricultural potential to less fruitful land. But in clearing land for agricultural development, the forests are destroyed. On the Tana River settlement schemes, for example, this has produced such an energy crisis that trees are now being planted under irrigation. This migration from one rural area to another is slowing as all the arable farming dry land is occupied. So over the next decade, people will start migrating from the countryside to the towns.

The need for fuel in towns is the second major cause of whole tree destruction. Wood, by weight, is largely made up of water, making it extremely uneconomical to transport. Charcoal is therefore the urban fuel, and the demand for it is increasing rapidly with urban growth. But cooking and heating requires two and half times as much wood to make charcoal as it did wood.

There have been a series of charcoal bans over the last 10 years, but they have been ineffective. They turn the forestry department into a police force which neither they nor the public relish. Furthermore, they force urban residents to use kerosene and electricity, which are three and six times more expensive respectively. Most importantly, charcoal making is the peasants' single largest source of off-farm income, after wage labour.

Plans to develop a fuelwood strategy in Kenya focus on reducing demand through conservation initiatives and increasing wood supplies. Conservation means stoves and more efficient conversion of wood.

Open fires are inefficient if they are only used for cooking. But they also give light and space heating; they ward off insects and provide a hearth round which people can meet. Making open fires more efficient usually means enclosing the fire, restricting the other uses. Without light, in particular, production has to end with sunset.

At present scrap metal workers in small businesses on the outskirts of towns make the bulk of 'stoves'. One factory, using mass production techniques, could meet the demands of a stove programme but that would make some 30,000 metal workers jobless. Again, new charcoal conversion technologies would tend to concentrate production into the hands of the few. Conservation pits big business against small producers. Current estimates indicate that, if conservation programmes were successfully implemented (especially in the urban areas), some eight million tonnes of wood could be saved each year — but at some large social cost.

THE CRITICAL challenge, therefore, is to grow more wood. The two principal strategies will be 'periurban forestry' and 'agroforestry'. Periurban forestry is planting urban greenbelts to supply wood — as wood not charcoal — to the households in town. The World Bank has already shown an interest in such a strategy which mirrors the way in which energy was provided to towns in 18th century Europe.

However, such a scheme will not provide wood for the rural population because plantations and periurban schemes are too far from their homes. Even village wood-lots have not proved successful in eastern Africa, where there is little tradition of communal production. The proposed solution is agroforestry, growing both crops and wood within each farm.

But the crux is that a successful agroforestry strategy would have to be run by and for rural women. Women constitute the bulk of agricultural workers in Kenya. They also have responsibility for a whole host of household tasks. They are the hewers of wood and the drawers of water. Women's time is under constant pressure, creating insurmountable problems. For example, as wood becomes more scarce, they have to choose between allocating time to water or wood collection. ▷

This article is based on Energy and Development in Kenya: Opportunities and Constraints. Scandinavian International African Institute, Uppsala, 1984.

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Already, some households are devoting up to 15 hours each week for wood collection. Less water means increased health problems: less wood means less hot water and less heating producing more ill health. Women with responsibility for production and reproduction are poised on the edge of a downward slope into ecological catastrophe. And, of course, any catastrophe would make even further demands on their time. They are are also the chief providers of health care.

Few of the roving agricultural advisers are women; therefore fewer female foresters and still fewer female engineers. And where they exist, they tend to be urban based. The real energy crisis of fuelwood, however, will only be solved by focusing on demand-driven programmes determined by women. If this is not achieved, in 20 years' time Kenya will be a desert. And the most fundamental cause will be that the central role of women as agricultural producers and household providers has been neglected. Only they have the possibility of producing the necessary 20 million tonnes of wood and only then if they have the power. □

Professor Phil O'Keefe works at the Beijer Institute, the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, where he co-ordinates international efforts on energy and development planning. Dr Barry Munslow works on energy and development issues in the Department of Politics at the University of Liverpool.

ITALY

Masonic message?

Konrad Brodzinski on the latest Bologna bombing theory

AS THE INQUIRY into the Bologna station massacre enters its fifth year, two people have been added to the list of seven suspects. But police and magistrates do not seem to have begun to untangle the complex web surrounding the neo-Fascist terrorists believed to be responsible for the bombing. A freemasons' lodge, a former Nazi war criminal and a network of international supporters already appear to be implicated.

The explosion at Bologna Central Station on 2 August 1980 killed 85 people and injured over 200. This made it by far the worst crime of its kind in Italy's post-war history. An initial dragnet operation, in which 44 people were held for questioning, proved inconclusive. The present nine suspects are all believed to be connected with right-wing terrorist groups. The most notorious among them, Stefano Delle Chiaie, is suspected of being the mastermind behind a number of terrorist operations. He is now in Bolivia.

Almost exactly six years previously, on the night of 3 and 4 August 1974, the *Italicus* express train was blown up at the small station of San Benedetto Val di Sambro also on the Bologna-Florence line, killing 12 people and injuring many more. Police and magistrates concur that both crimes were carried out by neo-Fascists. But investigations have not taken them much further.

The theory that is gaining credibility in many areas, though, is that the neo-Fascist terrorists worked not on their own initiative but on orders from above. This idea was first officially voiced when three men were put on trial for the *Italicus* bombing. They were later acquitted for lack of evidence. Lawyers representing the victims and their families wished it to be put on record that they believed that the direct perpetrators of the crime were 'inspired, armed and financed by the freemasonry, which was availing itself of subversion and terrorism of the Right, as part of the so-called "strategy of tension", in order to block the country's gradual slide to the Left, and also to create pre-conditions for a possible coup d'etat.'

In March this year, nine months after the end of the trial, the judges eventually made public their written justification of their verdict, which contained a surprising assertion. There existed, they said, 'grave and disconcerting correspondences' between the lawyers' thesis and the findings of the trial, 'above all with reference to the well-known P2 Lodge'. In mentioning Licio Gelli's organisation in an official document, the *Italicus* judges broke a long-standing taboo.

THEIR CONCLUSIONS have now received political support from the Italian Parliament's commission of inquiry into the P2 lodge, whose final report was published on 3 July. It concluded that the P2 lodge was involved in providing financial and other support for the extreme right-wing groups which carried out the *Italicus* massacre. It does, however, stop short of accusing the lodge of criminal responsibility.

The Bologna case is not mentioned in the commission's report. In the first place, it would be illegal for Parliament to prejudice the outcome of a judicial inquiry. Second, the report claims that Gelli's strategy took an about-turn in the mid-1970s. He was no longer interested in creating the conditions for a coup. Rather, he was content with infiltrating the Italian establishment from within. This may well be true, as far as it goes. But the P2 lodge was not an army, ruled by one man; it was — and still is — a hive of intrigues and interests.

From the little which is known of the Bologna Station case, it seems that Elio Ciolini, a right-wing terrorism supergrass told investigators that powerful groups connected with the P2 lodge had commissioned Delle Chiaie to mastermind the massacre and Delle Chiaie in turn had hired five people.

Of these five, two met their death soon after the bomb attack: one, Pierluigi Pagliai, in a police shoot-out in Bolivia, the other murdered by a fellow neo-Fascist in an Italian jail. A third, perhaps wisely, still refuses to talk. A Frenchman was released after it was decided that he could not have been in Bologna at the time. Joachim Fiebelkorn, a German, is being held in Frankfurt on cocaine-trafficking charges, but the Germans are refusing to extradite him to Italy on the slim testimony so far offered. Soon after he made his initial statements, however, Ciolini claimed that he had been paid to make them by the Italian secret services. He now, apparently, denies everything.

THE INVOLVEMENT of the Italian secret services was also mentioned by Claudio Nunziata, a public prosecutor involved until recently in the Bologna investigation. Nunziata revealed last May that a prisoner in Padua jail had informed his lawyer of an 'exceptionally serious' crime being planned by a terrorist group for August. A message was sent to the anti-terrorist squad. According to the prosecutor, it coincided with 'analogous information' received by 'an organ of central security'. 'Had the two items been compared', said Nunziata, 'they could have taken on the necessary significance — but they weren't'.

Also in May the West German weekly *Stern* announced a scoop: prior to the Bologna bomb, Fiebelkorn, Pagliai and another man, Carbone, had been seen in the Bolivian capital of La Paz talking to Klaus Barbie, the Nazi war criminal turned CIA agent and Bolivian military 'adviser'. *Stern* claimed that they were planning the Bologna bomb attack. Carbone is known to be Delle Chiaie's right-hand man, and thus the supergrass Ciolini's testimony suddenly regained credibility.

If there was any doubt that the bombers are alive and well, it was dispelled by an event last year. Again on the Bologna-Florence line, and again in August the engine driver of a passenger express train, about to go onto a railway bridge, spotted a suspicious-looking bundle on the track ahead. It was found to contain enough explosive to blow the bridge to pieces. On the same day, P2 lodge master Licio Gelli escaped from prison in Switzerland, just before he was to be extradited to Italy. He is also thought to be lying low in South America. Commentators discounted the possibility of a mere coincidence between the two events. The bomb, they said, must have been intended as some sort of 'message'. But the nature of the message remains a mystery.

On 19 July, magistrates brought charges of complicity in the Bologna bomb attack against two more people: Roberto Rinani and Massimiliano Fachini. Both had been arrested before, so the timing of the re-arrests, just as posters were going up all over Bologna urging citizens 'not to forget', suggests that they may simply be a placebo aimed at appeasing public opinion. A spokesperson for the victims' relatives told the press: 'Even if it isn't, and if, as it appears, the investigators are going back to their original theory, then that means four years have been wasted. We're starting again from square one.' □

THIS ENGLAND

£3 book tokens for entries printed. (On postcards, please.)

□ Payment to sperm donors is a matter of debate. A Bristol consultant defined the guideline for payment as keeping pace with the price of a bottle of whisky. — *Observer* (Mrs C. Fry)

□ Dead people should pay for their own funerals, says a report submitted today to a government committee reviewing the supplementary benefit system. — *Daily Telegraph* (M.G. Balston)

□ Ambulancemen who keep getting beaten up in mistake for policeman are being given new uniforms. *Daily Mirror* (Amanda Welles)

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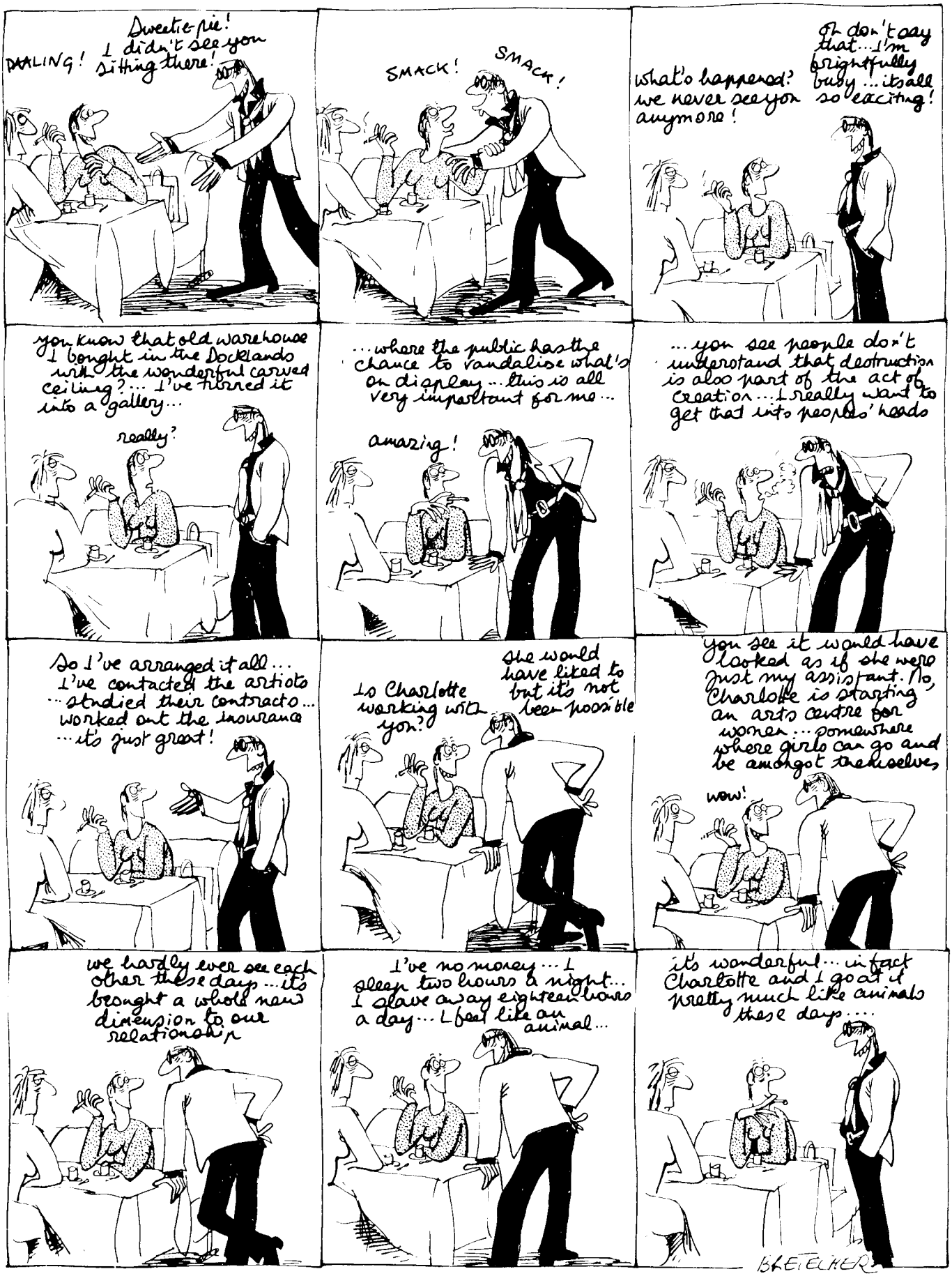
BRETECHER

OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS


DARLING!
Sweetie-pie! I didn't see you sitting there!
SMACK!
SMACK!
what's happened? we never see you anymore!
Oh don't say that... I'm frightfully busy... it's all so exciting!
you know that old warehouse I bought in the Docklands with the wonderful carved ceiling?... I've turned it into a gallery...
really?
...where the public has the chance to vandalise what's on display... this is all very important for me...
amazing!
...you see people don't understand that destruction is also part of the act of creation... I really want to get that into people's heads
So I've arranged it all... I've contacted the artists ...studied their contracts... worked out the insurance ...it's just great!
to Charlotte working with you?
she would have liked to but it's not been possible
you see it would have looked as if she were just my assistant. No, Charlotte is starting an arts centre for women... somewhere where girls can go and be amongst themselves
wow!
we hardly ever see each other these days... it's brought a whole new dimension to our relationship
I've no money... I sleep two hours a night... I slave away eighteen hours a day... I feel like an animal...
it's wonderful... in fact Charlotte and I go at it pretty much like animals these days....
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

Personal pensions

Sue Ward, London SW12

Charles Raw (*NS* 10 August) has missed the point on the dangers of 'personal pensions'. The proposals have been put forward by Fowler, but they were first invented by the far Right and are enthusiastically endorsed by Patrick Minford, who is no stranger to readers of *NS*.

Personal pensions are, in the shape proposed in the Consultative Document, the first stage in the process of destroying the State Additional Pension Scheme and privatising pensions as a whole, including the basic pension. The intention is that they should be contracted-out of the State scheme, and for anyone who does this, the DHSS will deem that they are getting the equivalent of the State benefit, regardless of what they are actually receiving. So people are going to be offered the 'freedom' to give up a State benefit and instead rely on their own investment expertise. If they do badly, as many will, they will have to rely simply on the basic pension, and on Supplementary Benefit. The next stage will be to 'deem' that they are receiving non-existent pensions for SB purposes as well.

This is the more dangerous because it seems likely that personal pensions will be very lightly policed, in order to get them off to the good start the right wing want. At a time when other sectors of the investment market are going to be more tightly regulated, post-Gower, this will mean that the sharks — those currently busy in commodity funds, for instance — will move into the pensions field for a quick killing.

Home truths

Peter Bridger, Cardiff

Many, many congratulations to Piers Brendon (*NS* 17 August) for saying at least some of what has to be said about the monarchy. But he spent too long attacking the personal imperfections of the parade of pampered incompetents who have in succession occupied the throne, rather than in attacking the throne itself, an item of furniture that should be broken up and sent to the bonfire.

Why do radicals not seem to see that monarchy is a form of apartheid? Just as the majority of South Africans are denied the dignities of citizenship on account of a characteristic inborn, over which they can have no control, so the entire commonality of England is reduced to servility by the accident of birth. It is time for the meanest she in England to take her rightful place alongside the greatest she in England.

Moses speaks

Paul Tyler, Chairman, The Liberal Party

A letter of length that would bore even *New Statesman* readers would be required to correct all the misconceptions John Rentoul introduces into his commentary on — and selected quotations from — our working paper on 'A Strategy for the Liberal Party' (*NS* 10 August).

However, three basic mistakes will demonstrate his failure to check out the facts. It is *not* in any sense a definitive blueprint, set in concrete, but a normal working reference document. It has *not* been referred to other Party bodies for delayed discussion, but for active implementation in so far as it is appropriate to their various responsibilities. I am *not* its author but merely, as Chairman of the Party, the coordinator of the team who have been working on it. Thus it is not a tablet of stone and I am not Moses.

Mr Rentoul implies scepticism over the Alliance's aim to replace Labour as the alternative to the Tories. I prefer Phillip Whitehead's wiser realism on your next page, where he refers to 'the first of the eight years Neil Kinnock will probably have to spend as Leader of the Opposition'. Can anyone seriously doubt Labour's demise after three successive defeats at the hands of Thatcher?

Boy meets girl

John Ebling, Emeritus Professor of Zoology, Sheffield

Will Sara Maitland (*NS* 10 August) explain why it is subtly sexist to refer to 'ova' as 'eggs', but 'sperm' as 'sperm' — and not 'seed'? 'Eggs' is merely the English for Latin 'ova'. 'Sperm', from Latin 'sperma', is late Middle English and well established:

> *Falstaff:* Go, brew me a bottle of sack finely.
> *Bardolph:* With eggs, sir?
> *Falstaff:* Simple of itself; I'll no pullet sperm in my brewage.

(Whether Shakespeare believed egg white was sperm or was only commenting on the superficial similarity is immaterial!)

'Seed', which is what Onan spilled on the ground when he refused to inseminate his deceased brother's widow as required by law, is now archaic as a synonym for semen. Its use creates an ambiguity, because the 'seeds' of plants are not male gametes but already fertilized female cells, embryos packaged with nutrients.

I have always described fertilization as 'the penetration of an egg by a sperm'. Can Ms Maitland please tell me where I have gone wrong? I suppose 'penetration' is sexist, too, but I must disclaim any responsibility for the design of this or any other biological mechanism.

Revolutionary farming

Jonathan Mirsky, London W11

Bill Hinton's letter (*NS* 17 August) about my interview (*NS* 13 July) charges me with twisting, slanting, distorting, and mis-stating. I taped and transcribed our interview, and took notes on three of his lectures. I also read his new book, *Shenfan*.

As far as I can see I made one error, which I regret: Hinton wants to retire to the hills of Licheng county, *not* Long Bow Village.

In my report of his remarks on the lady egg marketeer, I didn't 'feign amazement', I *was* amazed at her production, and interested in Hinton's judgment.

Why shouldn't I give as *my opinion* that many Chinese peasants would like to get their hands on Hinton's Pennsylvania farm? Wouldn't they? If it were divided into tiny strips, it is Hinton's opinion that 'they would be well-advised to pool it'. Perhaps. I merely suggested they'd like it all.

I hurt Hinton's feelings when I mentioned hauling nightsoil. An exaggeration, perhaps, but his passages in *Shenfan* on labouring in the fields and hanging around with the peasants are truly lyrical.

I think the real problem here is that Hinton is disappointed that 'his' China is changing directions. He used to write that Mao and the Cultural Revolution were a model to all. Now he knows they no longer are, nor did they deserve to be.

So in his disappointment he said to me and to public audiences, 'You can buy any policeman with a free meal', 'the law is whatever the Party secretary says it is', '90 percent of the peasants in north China are opposed to this system, but if you object you get charged with counter-revolution', 'sooner or later the peasants will act against polarization' (this was his answer to the question, 'will there be another cultural revolution?'), and 'Liu Shaoqi and Deng were always opposed to cooperatives. They went along with them in the Fifties to push them too far, to discredit them'.

Hinton has sweated his guts out for China for 40 years. His lectures and interviews now breathe irony, bitterness, and disillusion, palpable to those who heard him. I'm sorry he dislikes seeing how it looks in cold print.

Accountants' opinion

Alan Frood, Managing Director, Crown Agents

We were concerned to read the article entitled 'Crown "Banana" skids again' (*NS* 3 August). The writer reaches conclusions and makes implications about our accounting procedures which suggest that the Crown Agents failed to meet appropriate standards of accounting accuracy and efficiency. These statements are based on a draft report itemising matters which our auditors wished to discuss further with our staff. None of these matters was significant in terms of either our principals' or our own interests.

The following points have been made by our auditors, Deloitte Haskins and Sells, which put in context the draft report from which you quoted and confirm that the Crown Agents adhere to high professional standards of accountancy.

1. The draft does not reveal any matters that in our opinion constitute major weaknesses in Crown Agents' systems and such systems achieve the standards we would expect to find in any substantial trading organisation.
2. The draft does not reveal any instances of loss to Crown Agents' principals, or to Crown Agents, through administrative inefficiency or systems weakness.
3. The matters commented on in the *New Statesman* are taken out of context and in our view do not warrant the significance that has been attributed to them.

YTS: the facts, please

G.T. Kingsley, London NW11

I was irritated by the article about deaths of youngsters on the Youth Training Scheme (*NS* 27 July), and as I see from the follow-up item last week that it threatens to become a series, I feel I must complain.

Although never stated as such, the implication throughout is that the YTS is dangerous, and deaths of trainees are used as a stick to beat the scheme. No doubt some YTS activities are poorly supervised and managed, but at least those involved in running them have had to pay some attention to safety — among other things — in getting approval for the scheme. This is more than can be said for one alternative for young people, namely employment, and much more than for the other, unemployment.

Surely, if your reporter wanted to do a fair analysis he should have produced figures for deaths of 16-year-olds in employment, and also for the unemployed. Only if the MSC schemes are less safe than the other possibilities is criticism in general justified (as opposed to criticism of particular bits of mismanagement). It might even turn out that deaths are less likely on MSC schemes than in other contexts. Could we be told?

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Michael Hofmann

The Prudence Farmer Award

Our annual award of £100 to a poet whose work has appeared in our pages during the previous 12 months has been given to MATTHEW SWEENEY, for 'Ends', published in NS *22 June 1984. This year's judge reports.*

FACED WITH the last year's poetry in the *NS*, my first instinct is to tell the reader, in piously statistical fashion, what he or she has read or neglected to read. Between July of last year and June of this, there have been slightly fewer poems by (I should guess) slightly more poets than in previous years: 57 by 41. There were only a dozen recidivists, with Sylvia Kantaris represented by four poems and Matthew Sweeney and Mebdh McGuckian by three apiece. There was only one translated poem, Philippe Jacottet's *'On Voit'*, as good as a holiday in Stephen Romer's version: 'I see the schoolboys run with great cries/in the thick grass of the playground.' (How outlandish this plainness seems in English.)

And there was only one poem from across the Atlantic, and that was yet another recasting of Yeats's 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree': Donald Hall's rather bumbling 'Mr Wakeville on Interstate 90'. I should have liked to see more poems of both kinds: in particular the latter, where I missed the names of Anthony Hecht, Louis Simpson and W.S. Merwin, all of them previously regular contributors.

Is it the inadequacy and nostalgia inherent in any present, or has it really not been a terribly illustrious year? There have been poems by four past winners of the Prudence Farmer Award: Carol Rumens, John Levett, Laurence Lerner and Craig Raine; also a Harrison, a Muldoon, a Hughes and a couple of Thwaites; but otherwise not too many by what, in German, you could call 'the high animals'. I imagine that had John Carey been given this year to judge, he might not have been made to feel quite as small as he was in 1977: of the eight poet/pathogens that he named, only Ted Hughes has been published this year. (Or is this degree of respect simply no longer current? And is that the price for our poetry 'boom'?)

But then past judges, too, have been more illustrious. Some have used the award as an occasion for impressive and painful diagnoses of the contemporary magazine-poem: Valentine Cunningham in 1976, Ian Hamilton in 1979 and Michael Schmidt last year. Two more have served as midwives to the (twice-born?) Martian movement. I fear I probably shan't do either of these. Having read the year's poems, I don't sense the irresistible pressure of any particular style. Certainly, the presumed influences are just getting on and writing their own poems: Craig Raine is compendious and dainty and perplexing in 'The Gift'; Mebdh McGuckian, working at next-to-no-length, is alchemically and bafflingly sensitive; Jeremy Reed produces glittering description in 'Surfers' and Tony Harrison comments lugubriously on the fate of his drafts, recycling, as it were, his own 'Rubbish'. With the high premium there is supposed to be on poetic individuality, the least one can expect is a healthy divergence.

One reason why I shan't attempt a new characterisation of current poetry is that the old ones still hold true. Examples of the various weaknesses identified by my predecessors can be picked from this year's bunch just as easily as from the years they were made: Valentine Cunningham's accusation that poems often merely provided a footnote on creativity going on elsewhere; Michael Schmidt's that they were wilfully inadequate and, in a way, connived in their own defeat; most damagingly, but most helpfully, Ian Hamilton's missing of 'simplicity, strength of feeling and unforced directness of expression'. No doubt, infractions of these guidelines were not intended: who writes a poem to give offence, or to disappoint? At the same time, it's hard to be a meliorist in these matters: how would criticism respond to a poetry that was triumphal, major and direct? And has it ever produced it?

One poet who seems to have done something of the sort is Carol Rumens. Her 'A New Song' (30 September 1983) is the longest and most vocal poem of the year, undomestic, uninsular, a plea for reconciliation in Palestine. But she is still relatively new to her international mission and the final image of her poem, 'Olives and roses falling/To sweeten Palestine', is rather sugary and oddly close to the poetry of the politicians.

Among the foot soldiers of the weekly poems to pass review, there were many to commend. Frank Ormsby's version of the 'argument with oneself' is a revelation of the Demon Puritan he harbours within himself in 'My Careful Life'. In 'The Convoy', he shows himself to be as adept at listening to other people: 'She slumps on a stone with barely breath to wheeze/"I'm not worth thruppence. God, I haven't a puff."'Lachlan Mackinnon writes equally engagingly about childhood and the cares of parenthood — or vice versa. Charles Boyle's 'Still Life' describes how two people create and infest their personal space until it becomes as empty as a crowded stage-set, with personal tensions subsumed in the tensions of objects.

'Creil' by Sylvia Kantaris shows a journey receding in the mind, while, on another train journey, Selima Hill's susceptibilities are aroused by a couple sharing her compartment, by the night and the distance: 'we cross England asleep/dreaming of bodies unrolling like fields/as the train presses on towards morning.' Robert Sheppard, a name new to me, makes the poem a character — or, at least, a variable — in his interestingly uncoercive 'Returns':

You come into the room and the poem follows

Matthew Sweeney

Ends

At my end of the earth the Atlantic began.
On good days trawlers were flecks far out,
at night the green waves were luminous.
Gulls were the birds that gobbled my crusts
and the air in my bedroom was salty.
For two weeks once a whale decayed
on the pale beach while no-one swam.
It was gelignite that cleared the air.

The uses of village carpenters were many.
Mine made me a pine box with a door,
tarpaulin-roofed, a front of fine-meshed wire.
It suited my friend, the albino mouse
who came from Derry and ate newspaper
and laid black grains on the floor.
When he walked his tail slithered behind.
And when I holidayed once, he starved.

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to where private words
are found sheltering in cramped parentheses
like spoons in bed, making little sense.

When it came to making a choice for the prize, I was left with two poems, the first of the year and the second-last. In a phrase that one might come across in one of his own poems, Paul Muldoon is very much his own man. His 'Yggdrasill' (1 July 1983) was really the outstanding poem of the year: charismatic and puzzling, a hallucination of language, an outrageous clarity of tone married to a severely impenetrable darkness of subject:

From below, the waist-thick pine
seemed to arch
its back. It is a birch,
perhaps. At any rate, I could discern
a slight curvature of the spine.

The poem ramifies as much as its tree tapers. But, in the end, I felt I couldn't give a prize to something that eluded me quite so much. Instead, I chose 'Ends' by Matthew Sweeney. Two episodes make up a whole childhood. The poem constructs a world and populates it within sixteen lines. It is written with the clarity of a parable, with naturalness and a sly humour; balancing, for instance, not only sea with land, mouse with whale, but also the holiday and the two weeks while no one swam and, in a more deadly way, gelignite and Derry and newspapers. The things in the poem are as well assorted and as gravely significant as they are in a Joseph Beuys sculpture, without being at all portentous. Instead, they remain in the world, a world of predators and caution and negligence and the surveying of what has been lost. □

Michael Hofmann is the author of Nights in the Iron Hotel, *a collection of poems published by Faber last year.*
Matthew Sweeney's collection A Round House *was published last year by Allison and Busby.*

HISTORY
James Bentley

Priests' tale

Christian England, Volume 3: From the 18th Century to the First World War
DAVID L. EDWARDS *Collins* £12.95

David Edwards, now Anglican Provost of Southwark Cathedral, was once a publisher and thus knows how to push his own book. *Christian England* he describes as 'the first ecumenical history of English Christianity, trying to serve the general reader as well as the student and to do justice to Catholics and Evangelicals, Anglicans and Nonconformists, conservatives and radicals, poets and preachers, intellectuals and the people'.

How far has he succeeded? To carp before praising, as far as the religion of 'the people' is concerned, scarcely at all. Of the 18th century, he asserts that 'Deism, the belief in an impersonal and now inactive Creator . . . was probably all that was left of the personal religion of the majority of Englishmen'. Was that really the case with field labourers, fustian workers, blacksmiths and the like? Observing that the 19th-century philanthropist Charles Booth 'studied London's social problems with a thoroughness without precedent', he makes no reference whatever to Booth's startling investigation into the religious beliefs of the London poor. Of the Great War we hear the religious views of Cardinal Bourne, the Vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street, and Wilfred Owen, but never a word from the average bloke in the trenches.

Christian England is a book about the church leaders, not about those they sought to lead (who usually had other ideas about this). David Edwards has a gift for summarising with sparkle and wit the lives and convictions of such men and women, from the troubled Christianity of George III to the bizarre antics of Woodbine Willie and the chaplains in khaki.

His list of characters is vast. He's especially good on John Wesley (who, he notes, 'is said to have travelled about a quarter of a million miles on horseback or when old, in a simple coach; it is the distance of the moon from the earth'); on Mr Gladstone (whose 'most important source of energy was . . . a rare combination of religion and sex') and on the Baptist C. H. Spurgeon ('the biggest crowd-puller in the history of English religion'). Edwards relishes the foibles of his minor characters, such as the Welsh minister who publicly begged God to kill Disraeli ('We cannot kill him without being hanged ourselves, but thou canst kill him') and the members of the early 20th-century Christian Social Union, of whom G. K. Chesterton commented:

And so they sang a lot of hymns
To help the Unemployed.

And he is usually very bright about the poets.

Sometimes his need to condense so much history goes too far and leaves the reader floundering. The Archbishop of Canterbury E. W. Benson, we are told, was not only out of touch with lay thought but also with 'the psychological oddities and religious doubts of his own wife and children'. I realise Edwards is referring to the fact that the archbishop's wife retired to Lesbos to share her bed with Lucy Tait (daughter of the previous archbishop), that his son Arthur (Eton housemaster and then head of a Cambridge college) was a suppressed gay, that his daughter Maggie was also homosexual and made what she called a venture into rational faith; but it would be nice if Edwards had told the general reader this and also indicated which behaviour he regards as psychologically odd. The author could have avoided such undue compression had he given himself more space by sticking to his title and omitting the 50 pages devoted to Christianity outside the country.

Still, it's a good tale — though a melancholy one for Christians. Edwards quotes John Henry Newman who confessed in 1877: 'I have all this time thought that a time of widespread infidelity was coming, and through all those years the waters have in fact been rising as a deluge. I look for the time, after my life, when only the tops of mountains will be seen like islands in the waste of waters.' Newman seems to have been right. □

FICTION
Marion Glastonbury

Fighting words

Civil Wars
ROSELLEN BROWN *Michael Joseph* £9.95
The Tiger in the Tiger-Pit
JANETTE T. HOSPITAL
Hodder £8.95
The Warning Bell
LYNNE REID BANKS *Hamish Hamilton* £8.95

The British edition of **Civil Wars**, Rosellen Brown's third novel, has arrived peppered with transatlantic hyperbole. According to the blurb, it took five years to complete. (Coming from a publisher, is this a boast or a lament?) The cover proclaims its contents 'skilful . . . passionate . . . fascinating . . . consistently absorbing . . . absolutely gripping . . . intricacies of perception . . . justness of language . . . a brave and fine work'. Can *Vogue*, the *Chicago Tribune*, the *New York Times* and *Ms Magazine* all be right?

Yes, surprisingly, they can. There's enough here to exhaust anyone's supply of superlatives. Also enough to raise a wry smile at the honour

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accorded to the author by the media to whom her implicit challenge is in part addressed.

Teddy and Jessie Carll met as activists in the Civil Rights movement: he a local boy of redneck stock, a late convert to the godless principles of racial decency; she Jewish, raised in New York, a radical from the cradle. Fifteen years on, having survived assaults, imprisonment, hunger strikes and blacklisting, they still live in Jackson, Mississippi, in a nominally integrated neighbourhood where they and their children suffer harassment which *he* regards as random misfortune and *she* as racially motivated. The Klan is recruiting nearby and the stresses of 'Plywood Barracks' are compounded by the arrival of Teddy's orphaned niece and nephew, bearing the scars of bereavement and bigotry and horrified at finding themselves in a 'nigger dump'.

The workings of ideology within individual lives; the imprinting of the young with prejudice that encompasses the gorge and the gut; the emotional cost of opposition and the moral price of surrender; the susceptibility of eloquent idealists to flattery and manipulation by corrupt professionals; the frustration of attempts at local government reform amid the age-old poverty and squalor of the deep South: all these are explored in an imaginative tour de force which is historically illuminating and yet carries no trace of documentary 'faction'. Every gesture, every argument, every demonstration rings true. Tenderness and integrity are represented without sentimentality. It will be interesting to see whether the forthcoming film version emphasises the nature and significance of the political struggle or the personal shapes and sizes of the ex-combatants' defeat.

The momentous themes of the novel are pursued by mundane, unemphatic means. Playground fights, car journeys to visit relations, games, birthday parties, all the marginalia of domestic architecture, food, clothes, cleaning: these details which women commonly observe and which, in other fictional contexts, may appear trivial, are worth savouring here. The graceful energy of Brown's prose is such that the impulse to read fast, to get ahead with the action and catch up with the flashbacks, conflicts with the simultaneous desire to ponder each rewarding sentence.

It is hard to resist the notion this week that every novel would be *Civil Wars* if it could. It so happens that two more family sagas throw Rosellen Brown's achievement into high relief. They have in common a tyrannical patriarch and a rebellious daughter, envied by her brothers and dedicated to her art — the violin in one case; the theatre in the other. She travels to the ends of the earth and gives birth to a son. He is effectively fatherless but destined, at the age of eight, to heal the rift between relatives, to the delight of the wise old grandmother who has been chockful of insights and *joie de vivre* right from the start but submerged, hitherto, beneath the pall of wifely duty.

In **The Tiger in the Tiger-Pit** by Janette T. Hospital, the life-enhancing septuagenarian is a musician, an unknown genius. Gazing whimsically at her reflection (how I wish people wouldn't keep doing this), she plans the celebration of her golden wedding along the lines of a symphony to restore harmony. Upstairs, her invalid husband, a retired high-school principal, rages in literary quotations and broods over the trauma-ridden gazebo.

Once the guests are invited, it becomes clear that there will be no escape until each has unpacked an elaborate chapter of reminiscence; all in the same vein, I might add, whether they come from London, Australia or New York. 'It's to do with this sense of — of murk in the past — we both seem to have it — and the wish, the passion for something pure, some unambiguous memory of childhood.' The appositional phrases droop and sag, like overhandled pastry. Meanwhile, ballooning orgasms and 'the great velvet refuge of her vagina' cast doubt on the value of an open season in the hunt for sexual metaphors.

From Sergei, the heart-stopping maestro, to Joel, the brilliant professional mind. **The Warning Bell** of Lynne Reid Banks's title marks the dangerous corners heedlessly traversed by her actress heroine. Despite the resulting knocks, Maggie in middle age looks back with satisfaction on her progress, and there is a certain bumptious charm in the exuberant flow of clichés, quaintly misspelled on occasion, with which the narrative records the ups and downs of fame, fortune, friendship and visceral ferment ... My appreciation waned, however, in Nigeria, where 'exhalations of primordiality' bring out the natives' maternal instincts. Tolly, the humble Ibo girl, asks nothing better than to devote herself forever to Madam and her child. So Maggie scores a hit at the local primary school by producing a play about a Cannibal King and blacking up the faces of the European children with a mixture of cocoa and cold cream. □

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
Gillian Wilce

Borderland

A Very Private Eye:
An Autobiography in Letter and Diaries
BARBARA PYM *Macmillan* £12.95

For fans of Barbara Pym's novels this will be a further source of pleasure but readers unfamiliar with her writing are not advised to start here.

For the book's main fascination comes from its situation in the border country between the private Barbara Pym and the writer Barbara Pym: in the area where the life of the sprightly and flirtatious girl who settles gently and imperceptibly into 30 years in the same editorial job and what she would undoubtedly call spinsterhood (indeed, at 25 she was already joking about herself as 'a spinster lady who was thought to have been disappointed in love') is being transmuted into fiction — into the handful of small, sharp novels, first published in 1950 when she was in her late thirties, out of favour and out of print from 1963 till 1977 when they were abruptly rediscovered in time for her to enjoy a few last years of published success.

The book has the momentum of the private life. Half of it is about the affairs and affaires of her twenties, then suddenly (a mere 26 pages for 1948-1963) middle age and you cannot imagine how you got to retirement so quickly. And yet all the time there is that writerly detachment. Her youthful diaries are, in part, typically therapeutic outpourings but, after she has described how she has wept and wept, the wry smile will begin at her own absurdity. Her painful love affair at Oxford later becomes a fictional tale of middle-aged emotion and when, in her fifties, she conceives a bothersome affection for a younger man she turns it into *The Sweet Dove Died*, her own experiences becoming those of the far from sympathetic Leonora. She invents actions for the fictional man while in the company of the real one — which doesn't mean that it isn't real hurt which she thus keeps at bay.

Without the useful resumés provided by the editors (Hazel Holt and Hilary Pym) the facts of her life would be unclear. There are a great many areas of the private Miss Pym not visible from this frontier zone, while the writer's skills are to be most fully appreciated in the novels. It is for the glimpses of the commerce between the two that this autobiographical compilation is to be valued.

Refraining from analysis of her feelings (especially in later years), Barbara Pym turns a private, sardonic and unsentimental eye on the detail of her own life. 'Only 3 reviews,' she remarks of *A Glass of Blessings*. 'My humour deserts me when I am dealing with romance, I am tone-deaf to dialogue, am moderately amusing. Reviewers all women. Young?' □

P.E.N. New Poetry 1

to be published in conjunction with Quartet

Unpublished poems are being considered for our next anthology. They must be in English, and not translations. Up to six poems, typed and with each copy clearly marked with name and address, may be sent to the Editor, P.E.N. New Poetry 1, 7 Dilke Street, London SW3 4JE by 14 December, 1984.

Unfortunately no acknowledgement can be made, no correspondence entered into, and ***typescripts cannot be returned.***

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The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole

SUE TOWNSEND *Methuen* £4.95

My, how he's grown. At the start of the predecessor to this volume Adrian Mole was, famously, 13¾. By the end of the book he was 15 and *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* takes our hero to his 16th birthday, on which he wins the legal right to buy cigarettes, have sex, ride a moped and live away from home. 'Strangely,' he muses, 'I don't want to do any of them.'

But he always was different from other children. Let us never forget that Adrian is an intellectual, who submits his poems to the BBC and comments thoughtfully on the issues of the day. 'It was with great pleasure that I saw Mr Roy Hattersley on television tonight,' he writes in June 1982. 'Once again I was struck by his obvious sincerity and good vocabulary.' Adrian is a thoroughly responsible pundit. His diary entry for 18 January reads: 'Lord Franks has published his report on the Falklands War. I will make no further comment until I have studied today's *Guardian* editorial on the matter. *10.30 p.m.* Can't find *Guardian*: it's not in its usual place in the dog's basket.'

Adrian's diary is not confined to his observations on public affairs. Private affairs are well reported, especially his father's continuing dalliance with the woman known as Stick Insect and his mother's canoodlings with Mr Lucas. Adrian's own romance with Pandora is as troublesome as ever, but I blame the parents. Pandora's mum has joined the SDP; Adrian's has been to Greenham Common and is reading *Living Without Men — A Practical Guide* with a strange glint in her eye. As if that were not enough, Adrian also has to put up with acne, a new baby sister, ungrateful old Bert Baxter, the smelly and psychopathic Alsatian Sabre, the mad master 'Pop-Eye' Scruton, the delinquent Barry Kent, a holiday *en famille* at the Rio Grande Boarding House in Skegness, a blind date at a roller disco. . . Life's no fun for an adolescent intellectual. For the reader — as you'll know anyway if you've read the first volume — it's a hoot. Buy and enjoy.

Francis Wheen

Birth Reborn: What Birth Can and Should Be

MICHEL ODENT *Souvenir Press* £9.95

Many women are profoundly disappointed — sometimes to the point of suffering serious post-natal depression — when childbirth turns out to be a painful and difficult process. Their disappointment is all the greater if they have been led to believe that attendance at ante-natal relaxation or yoga classes will guarantee a 'natural' childbirth. Yet at Michel Odent's maternity clinic in a small town outside Paris, nine out of ten women have a smooth labour ending in unaided birth (Dr Odent has not used forceps since 1963) and problems are the exception.

Dr Odent has an explanation for this. He believes that women should be totally in control of their own bodies at childbirth. If left alone at this time, he says, women tune in to a deeper level of consciousness and know instinctively what to do. Even breathing techniques, he feels, will destroy this instinctive process by making the woman concentrate on external forces instead of internalising her energy. This level of consciousness may have much to do with the secretion of particular hormones during labour which act as natural painkillers, suppressing anxiety and inducing a general feeling of well-being. Any giving of drugs or synthetic hormones, any anxiety or tension felt by the woman, can affect this delicate hormonal balance. So, at Dr Odent's clinic at Pithiviers, the more difficult the midwives expect the labour to be, the more attention they pay to atmosphere. Painkillers are never used.

Although Dr Odent's ideas — along with those of Sheila Kitzinger, who supplies an introduction to his book, Leboyer and others — have had a beneficial effect on many of the practices now taking place in hospitals in Britain and elsewhere, the increasing emphasis on technology, which began just as those at Pithiviers were starting to reverse the process, is still with us. It is a brave doctor who ignores his battery of ultrasound machines, foetal monitors and sophisticated drugs when these have been credited with bringing down the perinatal mortality rate.

Dr Odent does not make light of the risks. But he says that at Pithiviers the same low mortality rates are achieved with a Caesarean rate of only 6-7 per cent (compared to 13 per cent in the UK). Moreover, while episiotomies are routine in most modern hospitals, at Pithiviers only seven per cent of women have them.

Michel Odent now finds himself in a dilemma. Believing as he does that men (except of course the fathers) have no place during childbirth, he seriously questions his own role in the process. At the end of this eminently readable and convincing book, which includes the women's own experiences, he writes that he is seriously considering leaving obstetrics. Whether he will really be able to tear himself away remains to be seen.

Julia Hagedorn

Cricket and Empire: The 1932-3 Bodyline Tour of Australia

RIC SISSONS and BRIAN STODDART *Allen & Unwin* £8.95

Books which recognise the indivisibility of sport and politics are rare but very welcome. MCC's bodyline tour of Australia in 1932-3 provides an excellent subject for one, as the tour's ramifications stretched well beyond the cricket grounds and it was possibly the first sporting event to trigger a political crisis.

In sporting terms, the fuss centred on what 'cricket' is. The tourists, led by the aloof and, later, mystical Douglas Jardine, developed a new bowling strategy — intimidation, by bowling short at the batsman rather than at the stumps. An everyday occurrence today, but then, with no restrictions on field placings, to hook the ball risked giving a catch, while ducking, without the benefit of helmets, was a risky business. The crunch came in the Third Test at Adelaide when two Australian batsmen were hit and injured. The crowds became increasingly hostile and telegrams and, through the recently installed link, telephone calls hurtled across the globe with the speed and frequency of Larwood's bouncers.

The authors first outline events on the field and quickly move to the political situation off it. They detail the background of the cricket administrators on both sides, stressing particularly the links between the MCC and the Conservative party. Australia, suffering from the effects of a world-wide recession and still principally a primary producer, was in the midst of a debt crisis, seeking to postpone repayments to the British banks. (What irony that the debt-ridden countries like Jamaica and Barbados now trounce the English cricket side so resoundingly and so consistently.) The unstated implication is that bodyline may have been cooked up by the British establishment to teach the colonial blighters a lesson. But, in truth, as the authors admit, 'the true nature of the tour remains elusive'.

The passions aroused by bodyline were certainly heightened by the political dimension of a dominion trying to get free of the worst excesses of colonial domination. The British, seemingly offended at accusations of unfair play, initially stood firm. But, with the test series in the bag, they gradually backed down, fearful both of the powerful emotions aroused and of any damage to future relations between the two countries. In the time-honoured tradition of the British establishment, the main actors in the piece were quietly ditched: within a year, Jardine, despite his continued success, was no longer captain and Larwood, too, was out of the side, never to play for England again.

In documenting the context of bodyline, the authors have provided interesting material, but have not been courageous enough to develop a theory. In fairness, many sources of information unaccountably still remained closed to them 50 years after the event, proving that not all the passions aroused have been extinguished. Meanwhile, *Bodyline* the film, the first major cricket movie, is in the pipeline and eagerly awaited.

Christian Wolmar

They Shoot Writers, Don't They?

ed. GEORGE THEINER *Faber* £3.50

Horror fascinates. Tales of imprisonment and torture are both sickening and compelling. Perhaps it is because we wonder what we will do and feel when visited by Poe's psychopaths. In this collection from the magazine *Index on Censorship* all the stories are true.

In 1980, in Turkey, the writers and publishers Muzaffer Erdost and his brother Ilhan were arrested for possessing banned books. Ilhan was beaten to death in a van on his way to the barracks. In 1977, in Argentina, the journalist Rodolpho Walsh got fed up with self-censorship brought about by the threats of the death squads. He published an open letter to the junta accusing them of persecution — his body has never been found.

These are the extreme consequences of daring to write. At the other end of the scale Kurt Vonnegut's books are banned by a North Dakota school authority and Tom Stoppard can't get a visa to visit Czechoslovakia. Writers in that country keep their spirits up by marvelling at the comic stupidity and embarrassment of their censors.

Whatever form censorship takes, whether silly, subtle or brutal, it is, as André Brink points out in one of the best pieces in the book, an admission of failure. The paradox of censorship is the power it confers on those who still insist on writing. It gives their works, in Brink's phrase, 'a greater resonance'. But, in the short term, the greater power belongs to the state, for it succeeds in forcing most writers to abandon the effort altogether.

This is a book for anyone concerned with non-parochial literature and the influence of literature on the state and society. But the magazine deserves a plug as well. *Index on Censorship* monitors the persecution of the written word. It has given banned writers an international (if small) forum; it engages in debate on press freedom; it compiles an index of acts of censorship. It is not financed by the CIA, or evangelical anti-communists, or right-wing 'freedom' groups. It is a bi-monthly (soon to be monthly) magazine which survives on subscriptions rather than counter sales. They save writers, don't they, at 39c Highbury Place, London N5 1QP.

Nigel Cross

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A sort of morality: the Medieval Players' *Great Theatre of the World*

EDINBURGH FESTIVAL
Angus Calder

On with the dance

RETURNING to Edinburgh after a few days away, just as this year's Festival was starting, I experienced a short spasm of familiar, dull outrage. Cars were parked where no cars usually stand. No doubt my local pub would be bristling with trendies with beautiful haircuts, asking for bitter instead of heavy; my favourite curry house crammed with earnest Teutonic tourists carrying Fringe brochures; the city once again as if under occupation. But I quickly controlled the reflex. This year, no dogged struggle to work as usual; I'm collaborating with the invaders.

In Athol Fugard's play **Master Harold and the Boys**, Sam the Sotho waiter tries to explain to his white boss's young son how ballroom dancing is beautiful. Competition finals are how life should be — as Harold translates Sam, they represent a 'world without collisions'. Is that how art works, as dream and release? Not in this play, given an expert performance by Sundown Theatre from Zimbabwe (Fringe). Sam, acted by the majestic John Indi with a rather posh accent, may have too much presence for the play's good. Andrew Whaley, however, as the unhappy White Suffrican schoolboy, is uncomfortably convincing.

Nor was Bartok's opera **Duke Bluebeard's Castle**, sung in concert by the intelligent Fischer-Dieskau and the exciting Julia Varady (Official Festival), without collisions — it's a suggestive psychological drama, one of the great modern masterpieces.

In terms of the ballroom-dancing model of art, the highlight of the first week for me was Cleo Laine gorgeously singing John Dankworth's settings of Shakespeare to a packed Lyceum Theatre (Official). No collisions occurred either in **Gertrude Stein and a Companion**, a play by the late Win Wells given a delicious performance by Miriam Margolyes as Stein and Natasha Morgan as Toklas (Fringe). They make a long-term Lesbian relationship seem not only charming but enviable. They time very witty lines to perfection. This production must surely be seen elsewhere. So, I hope, will Deborah Warner's highly intelligent production of **Measure for Measure** for Kick Theatre (Fringe) with Robert Demeger's half-clowned Duke outstanding among an excellent cast.

The three short and recent Beckett plays at the Church Hill Theatre (Official) strangely came close to collisionlessness. The productions, by the Harold Clurman Theatre from New York, have been polished to perfection. The result is very beautiful, but challenges only the intellect. And, sadly, the theatre was far from full, which brings me to themes I want to pursue this week and next; in short, what is art for and who is the Festival for?

What does the Festival offer the people who live in damp houses in Pilton and Craigmillar, who could do with some of the half-million pounds which the District Council gives it in subsidy? In May, for the first time ever, Labour took control of the Council. Ever since, tumbrils have rolled from the pens of Edim-bourgeois Tories through the correspondence columns of the *Scotsman*. Tourists, they told us incorrectly, would forsake a city whose Lord Provost refused to wear his robes. Art, above all, is doomed — the Festival will perish. Yet, in fact, this 'revolution' has coincided with Frank Dunlop's arrival as director of the Festival and Dunlop is in tune with the Council's wish to democratise it, as he demonstrated by standing quiet and tie-less among the citizenry when the Lord Provost opened a booth which will daily sell half-price tickets for Official events.

But what art should be given to the people and why? Fifty years ago Brecht faced exactly that question with his composer friend Hanns Eisler. Eisler's music and his expulsion from America as a subversive in the late Forties have inspired two Fringe shows. One, by Cambridge students, is too earnest and poorly constructed to vivify the contradiction between Eisler's protestations that he wasn't really a Communist, when given **More Than a Fair Trial** by the US authorities, and the explicit Stalinism of some of the words he had set. The other, **Rebel in Music**, by London Music Theatre, succeeds, though at the price of masking the contradiction and leaving out the most embarrassing songs. Jane Percival, though her words are not always ideally clear, sings the lyrics with magnetism and made, on the afternoon I was there, valiant efforts to get a small audience to participate.

If art is to speak to more people, it must make them feel welcome, pull them into the act. Two contrasting musical occasions stick in my mind. Before a very sparse audience the Smithsonian Chamber Players (Official) performed seventeenth-century music brilliantly. They wore nice smiles but spoke not a word to the friendly few present. That is the silly convention of classical concerts. Zila, a jazz band led by the South African sax Dudu Pukwana, turned up at Queen's Hall (Fringe) to face amplification problems which ruined their first half. They pulled their act, and the audience, together in the second with fiercely exciting playing till women dragged men out to dance.

Similar outreach was achieved before another sparse audience by the Medieval Players (Fringe). Their production of Calderon's **Great Theatre of the World**, a seventeenth-century sort-of-morality-play, was sheer delight. Coming from Adrian Mitchell, the English adaptation did not muffle up-to-date political resonances, and this dancing seaside donkey showed up the limitations of Tom Fleming's production of that old warhorse, Lyndsay's **Three Estates** (Official). I'm all in favour of presenting the one Scottish play before Barrie still actable, and the pageantry was super, but the speaking of Standard Scots verse by most of the cast lacked conviction. I sadly missed Rikki Fulton, who played Flatterie in the last production a decade ago and, as an expert pantomime comedian, held play and audience together. But I'd just seen him on film, in Bill Forsyth's **Comfort and Joy**, with a lovely cameo of a media-executive. Forsyth's movie (Film Festival), given its première screening to a vast and appreciative Playhouse audience, confirmed that his low-key, often freakish West of Scotland humour is an important new presence in international cinema.

Next week, I'll tell you about the Conference on 'The Future of the Arts in Edinburgh' arranged by the District Council, which ended with one councillor calling for 'Cultural Revolution', and about a reggae-funk musical put on by young people from Bristol, *Freedom City*, which gave me, I fancied, a glimpse of how such a revolution might be assisted. Meanwhile, I must mention two very

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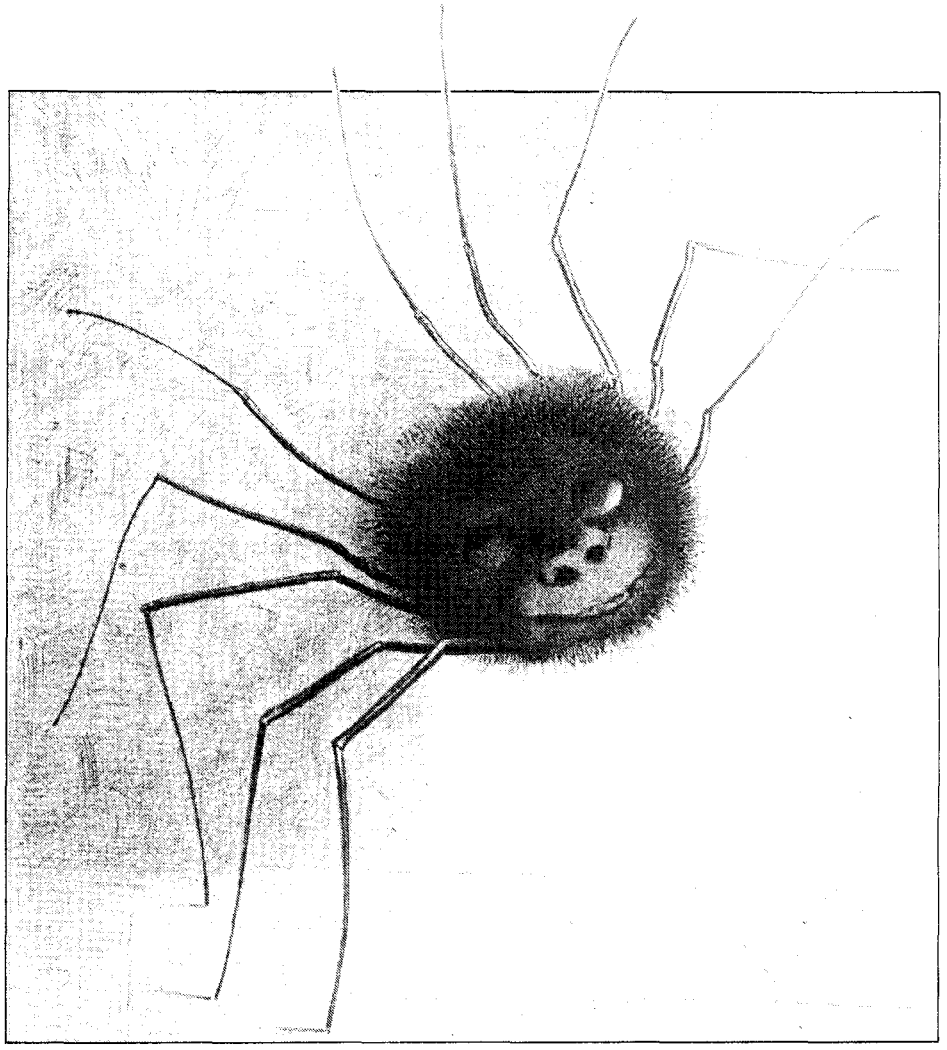
promising political shows on the Fringe. **Wenzani** makes a kind of cabaret out of the experiences of South African women. Dorcas Faku (black) smoulders and Diana Taylor (white) sparks — they complement each other admirably. It'll go on tour and should be looked out for. **I Am a Hibakusha** (Cambridge Mummers) is a play by Kai Hong about the experiences of a Korean woman who survived the Hiroshima bomb but gave birth to a monstrous child. The young actors perform sincerely and effectively. One dreaded beforehand undigested documentation or counter-productively earnest propaganda, but in fact it had dramatic surprises and good music and must have made its small audience think things they hadn't expected to think. I guess Brecht and Eisler would have applauded. □

ART
John Spurling

World remade

Creation: Modern Art and Nature
Scottish Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh
Dutch Church Painters
National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh
Rarities of Chinese Painting from the Arthur M. Sackler Collections
Talbot Rice Art Centre, Edinburgh



Detail from Odilon Redon's *L'Araignée* at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

The loan exhibition chosen to inaugurate the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art's new premises is as simple and audacious as its title. Whether intentionally or not, modern art has tended to come across as a mystery, an exclusive cult for devotees who have often seemed to take a pride in the fear, bewilderment, anger and derision it arouses in the general public.

The corollary has been that bad art has flourished, since, where mystification and unintelligibility have been the criteria, those outside the charmed circle have been apt to cling to what they could understand and those inside it to what they pretended to, both parties equally exalting the second-hand and mechanically executed. The audacity of this exhibition, organised by the Gallery's Keeper, Douglas Hall, with Keith Hartley, consists not in demonstrating that the Emperor is wearing no clothes, but in pointing out firmly and clearly why he is dressed in his birthday suit, how practical and necessary his costume is and what a fascinating and delightful spectacle he makes. After this show modern art should begin to seem less esoteric and perhaps in time it will even happen that, with confidence and a basis for judgment restored, we shall all start to use our eyes and minds again to distinguish between what is good and bad.

Creation is presented, as in the Book of Genesis, in seven sections. There are only two works in the first section: a tall dark-blue canvas by Barnett Newman divided down the middle by a single stripe of lighter blue — the separation of light from darkness, the energising of one colour by another — and Lucio Fontana's large sphere of roughly cast bronze splitting apart round its equator, the title of which, 'Spatial Concept', may sound dry and specialised, but the visual and tactile presence of which gives it the most obvious possible meaning.

These two works are enough to set the tone of the whole exhibition. Descending Miltonically through 'The Heavens' to 'The Earth' and 'The Seas', you hardly require the brief explanation on the walls or even the titles to receive the message: the artists' acts of creation mimic and celebrate God's or Nature's; the last hundred years of increasingly persistent delving into the secrets of geology, astronomy, physics, chemistry, biology, geography, anthropology, etc, are enthusiastically, painstakingly, lovingly reflected and recorded by every imaginable means in the art of the period. How could it have been otherwise? How could anyone have thought that the traditional art of illustrating surface appearances would have been adequate, unless artists were prepared to ignore everything that was new and say that reality was something unaffected by changes in our knowledge?

Lowry's bare grey washes of paint representing sea and sky are a sort of reality — as much of the artist's mood as of the thing seen — but so is Mondrian's astringent pattern of little black vertical and horizontal lines and Klee's horizontal bands of colour. Nolan paints the look plus some of the feeling of the Australian desert, Mark Boyle exactly recreates a section of red sandstone cliff out of fibreglass, though you would swear it was the real thing about to crumble off the wall at your feet, Max Ernst imagines a rock formation and a city and conflates the two into an image that seems to have been formed by rubbing the canvas over a hard surface. Modern art continually makes you conscious of its techniques, precisely because its subject is so often the technique of nature.

The exhibition's final sections are 'Plants', 'Creatures' and 'The Human Image' and there are two special sections of photographs, to remind us that even the camera can mix subjectivity and technical experiment with surface appearance. The new gallery is neither in its setting nor its interior 'feel' a patch on the old one in the Botanical Gardens, but for a collection of modern art as large and important as the Scottish National Gallery's has become, space is the prime need. *Creation* is laid out on the first floor, while the ground floor, consisting mainly of a long corridor serving a series of cubicles, is devoted to the gallery's own paintings and sculpture, a choice rather than a fully representative selection which complements and extends the theme of *Creation*, especially the human side. I particularly enjoyed the hanging of Otto Dix's luxuriantly sexual *Nude Girl on a Fur*, pink and plump in a lurid yellow-green light, side by side with Constant Permeke's dirty grey winter landscape in Flanders, each adding a dimension to the other.

Back at the Mound, Hugh Macandrew, the Keeper of the National Gallery of Scotland, has devised a small and fascinating exhibition of **Dutch Church Painters**, partly as a contribution to Scotland's Festival of Architecture

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and partly to set off and explain one of the Gallery's recent acquisitions, the hunchback Saenredam's *Interior of St Bavo's Church, Haarlem*, a masterpiece of perspective and soaring space filled with golden light, the kind of painting for which any serious Keeper would cheerfully sell his soul.

At the Talbot Rice Art Centre there is a Festival exhibition of **Chinese paintings** lent from the Sackler collections in the US. The show begins with a few very early works and ends with some recent forgeries, but its chief glory is a large group of works by Tao-chi, from the end of the 17th century: landscapes, flowers (especially plum blossom) and scholar-artists in their mountainous retreats which give you second thoughts about *Creation*. Was it really necessary for anyone ever to paint again once the Chinese had reached this pitch of sensitivity? Perhaps not, but then what about the Saenredam, half a century earlier than Tao-chi's mature work, and what about that Mondrian consisting of three black lines and a square of yellow on an expanse of white in the Gallery of Modern Art? Art is fortunately not an Olympic Games: the gold medals for creation are shared among innumerable champions and across time as well as space. □

ARCHITECTURE
Jules Lubbock

Yin quest

I APOLOGISE in advance to long-suffering readers for returning yet again — this time in an article praising an exhibition entitled *Women Architects: Their Work* — to Mr Palumbo and Modern Architecture. But a recent article in the *Guardian* (13 August 1984) makes it clear that male chauvinism lies at the root of the destructive aspects of modern architecture.

The article is written by Martin Pawley, the *Guardian*'s new architecture critic, and portrays Mr Palumbo's struggle to erect his Mansion House Miesian tower as an Arthurian search for the Holy Grail. Pawley then makes the curious observation that, whereas Palumbo's witnesses at the public inquiry were males, aged 55 or over, 'those who conducted the case for the conservationists were by and large women, aged 35 or under', who were not, moreover, 'above giggling' at Palumbo's witnesses. Since only two of the four people conducting the case against Palumbo were women by gender, one must suppose that Mr Pawley was using the word 'women' in its metaphoric and derogatory sense. Miesians are 'grown men'; conservationists are 'giggling women'.

The equation of Modernism with masculinity goes deeper. In a recent article, published elsewhere, Mr Pawley wrote: 'A fascination with weapons is the sign of a good designer, because weapons represent design shorn of all sell-functions . . . It is the sheer perfection of military equipment. Racing cars had it once . . . Now they are about as fascinating as hovercrafts, or worse still, vacuum cleaners.'

This terrifying identification of modernism with weaponry is widespread among high-tech architects: 'toys for the boys'. 'Women', of either gender, who venture into architecture, face a rough time. Lutyens, asked for his view of the place of women in architecture, is said to have quipped, 'As architects' wives.' Traditionally women in the design professions have been interior, landscape or fashion designers — the soft stuff. Only 7 per cent of registered architects are women; only 21 per cent of students; although at the universities of London and Cambridge they represent as much as 50 per cent. The ethos of architecture schools is one of macho competitiveness. There are few women teachers and it is far from uncommon for women students to be told to pack their bags and have babies.

None of this is either surprising or mysterious. A similar situation prevails in other professions — with law and medicine (except for surgery) faring better, chartered accountancy far worse. What *Women Architects: Their Work* (which is available for touring) and the excellent accompanying booklet, which can be bought from the RIBA, show, for the first time I believe, is the contribution made by women to architecture.

One was not surprised to learn that as late as 1891 there were only 24 women architects in the UK — and, until 1898, not one was recognised by the RIBA. (The hostility continues and, for this reason, several women refused to show in this RIBA exhibition.) But there are still some impressive accomplishments.

It was in housing policy that Octavia Hill, though not an architect, made her pioneering achievements. She was opposed to high-rise even then, when it meant seven-storey tenements. She was also a founder of the National Trust, then dedicated to preserving open spaces for recreation in our cities and not a dodge to enable landowners to avoid estate duty. Needless to say, the Martin Pawleys of the 1870s sneered at this great conservationist.

In this century one can point to Elizabeth Scott, who designed the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford, and Jean Clapham of the GLC who was responsible for the exceptionally beautiful form of the new Thames Barrier, a fact which only this exhibition has brought to light (Valerie Wise please note). But by and large women have been employed by local authorities, or, above all, in small practices with their husbands.

Consequently, housing has constituted much of their work — the domestic caring and hence low-esteem end of the profession which, in most architecture schools, is not even taught as a subject. I can only report that much of the recent work shown was like a breath of fresh air, human in scale and with finely handled detailing. The architects I talked to about brickwork and craft might have inhabited a different planet from that of Mr Pawley and his architect knight errants.

But here is the Catch 22: so long as the distinctive contribution of women architects is defined as belonging to the domestic and community fields (what work they contribute to great public projects being lost in the anonymity of local authority departments), they will remain the nurses of the profession, ignored by those newspapers like the *Guardian* whose correspondents see architecture as an heroic and personalised struggle by macho architects and their rich clients to impose schemes upon a supposedly ignorant public.

An exhibition like this plays an important role in giving us a glimpse of what our environment *might* look like were Yin and Yang to be given an equal status.

FILMS
John Coleman

Broken stories

Paris, Texas (PG)
Lumiere; Screen on the Hill; Gate, Notting Hill
Under the Volcano (15)
Odeon, Haymarket from 31 August

Winner of the Palme d'Or at this year's Cannes festival, Wim Wenders's **Paris, Texas** is streets — or should that be roads? — ahead of his last two aberrations, *Hammett* and *The State of Things*.

Once again, this itinerant German director casts a foreigner's eye at the American landscape, abetted by Robby Miller's clean-edged cinematography, where night skyscrapers, rocky wastes, an ironically sited mural of the Statue of Liberty are felt to exist quite apart from the human figures passing by or through. But here the sub-Martian strangeness is often strongly mitigated: this is the most *affectionate* film from Wenders to date. Maybe his close script collaboration with Sam Shepard (and, more mysteriously, with Kit Carson) had its effect. Shepard, author of the little *Motel Chronicles*, a departure-point, refers to them as 'broken stories' and no one should come to *Paris, Texas* with expectations of conventional coherence.

Four years gone, parched, mute Travis turns up at the Mexican border, to be taken by his younger, married brother to recuperate in his LA home. It transpires that Travis's wife Jane, also address unknown, has entrusted their small son Hunter to brother and missus after a marital break-up. Travis slowly mends, sets out to win back his abandoned kid's love (an excellently funny scene shows the man being coached into *looking* paternally dignified and dapper by a Mexican maid) and succeeds so well that father and new-found son drive off to track down skipped wife-mother Jane. Two long, closing sequences find these errant, agonised parents at first tentatively, then in full spate — when Travis regains his tongue, it wags with high articulation — re-discovering each other through the one-way mirror of a peep-show encounter booth. That is not, in fact, the absolute end, which I shall not divulge, though some may deem it so.

For those terminal exchanges in a Houston sex joint, shot and edited with claustrophobic bravura, are of a sentimental banality in no way

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redeemed by being so obviously 'written'. And the mind, in dejection (is *that* all?), turns back rather to reflect on a piece that — behind its several enticements — may be thought to have fallen apart at its themes. Toying with the exotic (Travis's sister-in-law is French — that Texan Paris the thumbed snap of a sterile plot Travis once bought); emphasis on the gaps between people, even 'alienation'; the insistence that life is ungovernable, haphazard, a series of moments — Wenders has been here before, and before that.

Not for him to worry his artistic soul with psychological likelihoods, when the cruelly dreamy ease of little Hunter's desertion of his adoptive parents, or of a surely unwise last abdication of Travis's, suits his footloose purposes: yet, as a myth of behaviour, it is a miss. The redeeming features belong almost entirely to sweet-faced Harry Dean Stanton, whose performance as child-like Travis is so winning as to ensure that most of the others are losing. To be fair, Hunter Carson (whose father assisted on dialogue) is cool as the spunky kid and a blonde Nastassia Kinski has added Texan to her accents. There is also a convinced, usefully bridging score by Ry Cooder. And there *are* powerful, humorous, loving 'moments', where everyday life recognisably blossoms. But the sense of some larger ache lying at the back of a bold, interesting surface — Stanton's holding presence apart — stays unspecified, unspecific.

As does the rock-bottom reason behind making a movie out of Malcolm Lowry's anfractuous, erudite, infuriating and brilliant masterpiece **Under the Volcano**, a novel which, more than most, is the language which is the novel. The alcoholic Consul's consciousness, for one thing, is intractable, impossible to convert: 'he either thought or said', runs the book passim. Yet Lowry himself was the first of very many to try a visual adaptation.

The necessary said, then, what shall we make of John Huston's filming of Guy Gallo's script? That it is an extremely handsome series of set-pieces, an intelligently pursued scamper through the ex-Consul Geoffrey Firmin's thronged stations of the cross during the Day of the Dead in Cuernaca, Mexico, 2 November, 1938. (The date has significance not merely for its mortal overtones but as letting in crucial references to the Spanish Civil War and Nazis abroad in Mexico.) In this splendid tale, Firmin's divorced wife Yvonne (Jacqueline Bisset) has just returned to him, to find his half-brother — and her ex-lover — Hugh (Anthony Andrews) in residence.

Given the sacred text from which this has been extracted and the write-as-they-went procedures of *Paris, Texas*, there are odd similarities between the two, most notably in the predominance of a protagonist, and an actor, beside whom the rest sometimes look ill at ease if not redundant. Albert Finney grasps the impossible part of Firmin with his whole, considerable body, face and voice, relishing the posh-sardonic lines that come his way (the film is *funnier* than the book), wrenching himself from near-lachrymose anguish into perilous postures of sobriety (with a hint of self-mockery, as if he twigs no one is really deceived), strumming the strings of his impotent jealousy to hideous effect.

Around him, Huston has assembled a rich panoply of carnival skeletons, bandits, whores, images of the nightmare world he is never far from. Aside from the nudging shot — one for the text-books? — of skulls reflected in Firmin's dark glasses, the direction (and overall conception) will hardly jar those who have not read the Lowry. What one inevitably wonders is whether it won't seem a hell of a hullabaloo about a piss-artist at the end of his time and tether. Under *what* volcano, pray? □

TELEVISION
Mary Harron

Pink cheeks

THE BEST SCENE in BBC-2's **Fit for a King**, Julian Pettifer's abysmal documentary about Gordonstoun, was some archive film of the school's founder Kurt Hahn. Wearing black glasses and barking at the camera, he looked the spitting image of Peter Sellers as Dr Strangelove. Hahn was a Jewish refugee from the Nazis, but his philosophy of education sounds like a rather homo-erotic fusion between a Greek gymnasium and the Hitler Youth: not that this was the interpretation offered in the BBC's crawling little film, which showed us nothing but pink cheeks and enthusiasm.

Shot in the style of a rather duff advertising promo, *Fit for a King* showed us all the wonderful activities on offer. Here we have mountain climbing (shots of children dangling from rocks), music (shots of violin bows scraping), pottery (shots of hands lovingly moulding a pot), penalty drill . . . Oops! Pity about the penalty drill (shots of boys jogging in a circle for hours) but Prince Edward explained that there isn't *enough* corporal punishment at Gordonstoun: 'A beating or a thrashing when used in the right context is very valuable.' So that's why Prince Andrew ended up with his trousers down at that London restaurant — he was trying to make up for what he'd missed at school.

Of the two Royals on offer, Prince Andrew came off best — dumb, of course, but a human being. Edward looks like an icy little bastard and too smooth for his own good. Prince Charles, who hated the school, didn't appear, but then no one who didn't like Gordonstoun appeared. Perhaps that's what the headmaster, Michael Mavor, meant when he described the BBC film as 'very fair'.

You would have thought that a quite eminent television reporter, when faced with a choice between making a decent documentary and sucking up to the trustees of a public school, would have opted for his profession. But put a reporter within creeping distance of royalty and scruples melt like wax.

I would have liked to know about cliques, persecution and groping in the showers — or at least get the verdict of one of the more fragile, artistically inclined graduates of the school and hear what they thought about penalty drill. Michael Mavor explained that, 'All we do is allow people to see what their weak points are and how to cope with them.' One method is to send the students off on long, long, solitary walks to mull over their sins. A solitary walk for Julian Pettifer for making this film, and a beating or thrashing for the BBC for showing it.

As television is bad at analysis and so very good at emotion the best documentaries *are* biased — but honestly, openly so. **The Miners Film** on Channel Four's Eleventh Hour slot was made during the 1974 strike and was far superior to anything we've seen on the current one — if only because it showed what it was like to work underground.

Over the past six months the news reports have offered the same few images: police charging, miners jostling, people shouting into the camera. We are told over and over again that the mining communities have been turned into a separate, police state, but the cameras never get behind the lines. *The Miners Film* was a dark montage of images and voices, including a group of old-age pensioners reminiscing about the first General Strike and an account of how private industry made a bundle out of nationalisation. Not only the mine shafts but all the interiors were dark and cramped, and when there was a flash of news footage of politicians climbing out of taxis in a bright London street you caught vividly the sense of two utterly separate worlds. *The Miners Film* was sometimes hard to follow, but emotionally very clear, because the emotions *were* clear. 'If they have to put us in jail we all go to jail'; film of dockers and engineers offering support: 'everybody's going out of their way to give us a helping hand.' A 1984 version would show new battle lines and a different kind of civil war — but why hasn't that film been made?

The new **Cameron Country** (BBC-2) takes two series, *One Pair of Eyes* and the first *Cameron Country*, as a montage of James Cameron's career, linked by wry — but excessively self-deprecatory — comments from bars. It has wonderful moments, but it's like hearing a favourite singer do a medley of their greatest hits: you don't want to see an extract, you want the whole thing.

The **Levin Interviews** (BBC-2) have ended, which is sad just because Bernard does the most amusing noddies in recent television history: eyes popping, head jerking up and down in a pantomime of intelligent interest, appreciation, etc. I tuned in late to his interview with Roy Strong, which looked like two vanities gracefully entwining and colliding with one another. More entertaining was the previous week's encounter with the massive eminence of Lord Rothschild, who glared down at Bernard like a hippopotamus distracted by the antics of a small performing dog. □

Among this week's contributors:

JAMES BENTLEY has been Vicar of Oldham and Research Fellow in Christian Social Thought at the University of Sussex. His study of *Martin Niemöller* was reviewed in *NS* 17 August.

ANGUS CALDER is Arts Tutor for the Open University of Scotland. Among his publications are *Russia Discovered* and *Revolutionary Empire*.

MARY HARRON works for Channel 4's *Ear Say* and writes on rock for the *Guardian*.

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FIRST PERSON

Bill Greenwell

In other words

DURING THE COURSE of what follows, I invite you to share in a real treat: part three of my first mortgage protection policy. Or, just to whet your appetite, a *Copy of the Schedule as amended containing the conditions applicable to an assurance under the Group Life Assurance Policy Deed made between Guardian Assurance Company Limited of the one part and Nationwide Building Society (herein referred to as the Grantee) of the other part* — as wacky a subtitle as you're likely to find. (The other eight parts you may take as read, several times.)

I shall try to spread the pleasure by introducing the policy, in episode form, in to the main text. That way, we can chat about other matters. I remember, when I was at

> In the case of the death of the Life (or one of the Lives) Assured within 12 months (or within 24 months if the loan shall be granted by instalments some or more of which shall be payable after the

school, I got to study for Economics A level. Not that I took it. The jargon beat me, hands down (mine were perpetually up). But I seem to recall there being a little item called 'Rent'. It was chapter five in a thick orange book: 'Rent'. I thought I knew what that was —

> date of the commencement of the assurance) after the date of the commencement of the assurance the sum assured shall be the amount stated to be the sum initially assured in the Certificate which the Company delivers to the Life (or

what you paid for a room at flat rate. But, no, 'Rent' was not 'rent'. To the aspiring econoclast, it meant something altogether else. At the seventeenth attempt, I laid down my textbook with a sorry thud and, making the usual excuse, put my brain back in its box.

Words worry me. There *are* jolly ambiguities by which I don't mind being foxed, as when

> Lives) Assured; in the case of the death of the Life (or one of the Lives) Assured at any time thereafter the sum assured shall be a sum equal to the amount which would have been owing to the Grantee on the anniversary of the date of commencement of the assurance immediately prior to

I sidled into a bar in some corner of a foreign resort and coolly ordered Dry Martini — to receive three, because the barman thought I was German. But, during the recent patch of madness when I found myself being slalomed through the sale and purchase of property,

> the death of the Life (or one of the Lives) Assured by virtue of a mortgage securing at the date of the commencement of the assurance (or in the case of a loan granted by instalments as aforesaid 12 months after the date of the commencement of the assurance) a principal amount equal to the sum

I was badly tripped by a sentence accompanying the building society's valuation report on the prospective house. It said: IMPORTANT, so I took a beady heed of it and the last sentence insisted that (my italics) *If you are purchasing the property, you will receive a notice that the Society does not warrant that the purchase price is reasonable.* Okay, so some of you are chuckling. It seemed to me to make as much

> initially assured repayable by equal monthly instalments comprising capital and interest over the term of assurance shown in the Certificate of Assurance (or in the case of a loan granted by instalments as aforesaid the term of assurance shown in the Certificate of Assurance reduced by one year) if (a) all repayments of instalments

sense as a memorandum famous at my place of work, advising staff, in the event of a fire, 'not to search a building for anyone who is not in fact there'. It said to me that, since I was going to purchase, they, the swines, were going to write in with the miserable opinion that they did not consider I was paying the right price. The valuer thought I was being robbed! Bloody

> of capital and interest and other payments (if any) due in respect of or secured by such mortgage had at the date of such death and at all times during the subsistence of such mortgage been duly and punctually paid and (b) the rate of interest payable in respect of such mortgage had at no time exceeded the smaller of (i) 18% per annum and (ii) the rate of interest chargeable in accordance with the terms of the Mortgage.

hell! At the building society, they confessed themselves also flumoxed, but not to worry. I panicked.

Luckily, my solicitor, who is patience personified, pinned me to a chair while she explained that 'warrant' means 'guarantee'. Ah. Oh. Fog clears, sweat slips back into its pores. All the same, I wish we didn't have to defuse so many bombs as we traipse our way through the formalities of being born and so on.

Settling like dust into a chair with the original (1829) documents concerning our new, unwarranted abode, I reflected that they didn't, doubtless, do it like this in the old days. Er

> . . . *From this Indenture Witnefseth* that in pursuance of the said recited agreement and for and in Consideration of the said Sum of Twenty-five pounds of lawful English Money so paid by the said William Phillips to the said Thomas Simons as aforesaid at the Time of the said Purchase The Receipt whereof

WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2836 **Set by E.O. Parrott**

The heroes and heroines of classical mythology got themselves into some difficult situations. Could we have letters to Agony Aunts (or, indeed, Agony Uncles) from any legendary character — together with the reply. Or possibly even the reply alone. Max. 150 words by 5 September. And would compers please note that (for reasons beyond their control) the deadline must now be a Wednesday.

No 2833 **Set by P. Kay**

Extracts from speeches *opposing* the resolution that Labour's policies 'reflect the needs and aspirations of ordinary citizens' and 'face the issues of the last part of the twentieth century'.

Report **By Glancing Tom**

Just slipped in to give the windows their usual two-monthly wipe-over to find the place swathed in a pall of sepulch-whatsit gloom: potted plant leaves strewing the floor like tobacco strands; smells of a not too encouraging nature seeping from out of the fridge; and a pile of your competition entries gathering, I'm ashamed to tell you, something very like dust. So everyone's gone to the Algarve, eh? Or exercising their yachts? As it turns out, it's lucky for you: most of your entries could have come straight off the Letters page. No disrespect, but you are supposed to be slightly *funnier* than that. For the few who succeeded, I think that you've earned yourselves a tenner.

Comrades, that we should be speaking of 'ordinary' citizens at this Conference is endemic of our Great Movement's refusal to understand the effect of the *media*. Are we dunces enough to hand them truths upon a plate? Our manifesto should shine like a silver salver of fibs: then let the gutter press twist and distort each crooked picture that it paints into some semblance of the truth. Let us turn our backs on reality, upon the supposedly quintessential issues of the next 16 years. We have faced them until the faces with which we faced them were blue. Better to play upon those issues which are mad, bad and insensible, so that our platform may be the more correctly represented in the press. WILL BELLENGER

Ordinary people are thick. All they read is the *Sun* and *Penthouse* and all they watch on TV is *Crossroads* and video nasties. We intend to do away with class barriers by educating the masses until they are capable of reading Benny Green in the *Mirror* and prefer watching *Weekend World* on Sundays to getting pissed at the local. Most average citizens aspire to a better car and more expensive holidays. I say they should want to help feed the starving millions overseas, and care for the disadvantaged in this great country of ours. (My 76-year-old mother lives on bread and soup.)

As to facing present day issues — fuck them. Things were much more amenable to Socialism when we began in 1900. I say let's get back to those simpler times by bombing the Middle East oil-fields, thus removing the polluting motor-car from our streets. GEORGE COWLEY

Quite frankly, comrades, I am sick and tired of hearing delegates to this conference coming to this rostrum and talking about the future. I have been a member of this Party for 46 years. I was knocking on doors when some of you were in short trousers and I tell you candidly, comrades, that the Labour Movement *(begins to turn from side to side and gesticulate)* and the working people of this country will not vote for these policies. They have heard such promises before and they will not be fobbed off by media talk of the extinction of the earth's resources, the threat of global war and the social consequences of a post-industrial society. And I want to say this — you'll get your turn, comrade, I have a right to my say — quite frankly, I am totally amazed to stand here at this microphone and hear people talk about the 21st century. In all my years in the labour movement I have set my face against this sort of talk. And I want to say this, comrades, that this great movement of ours... *(red light flashes, chairman knocks over microphone).* NICHOLAS MURRAY

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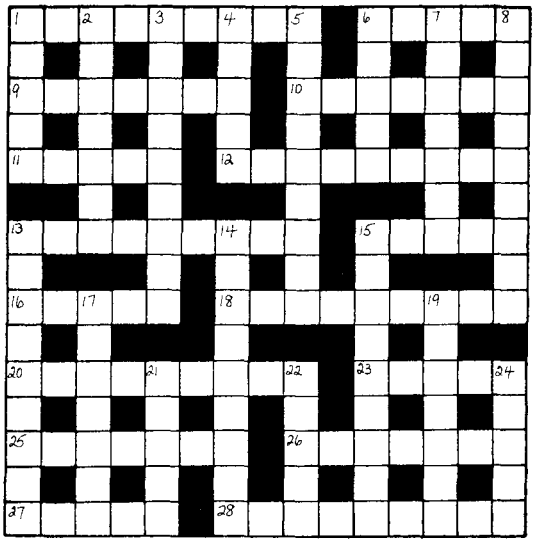
Weekend Crossword 1451

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1451, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 4 September.



Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

ACROSS

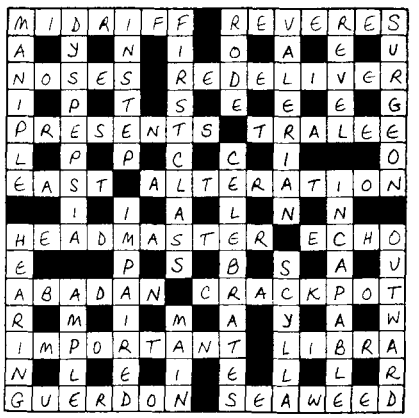
1. Without the mockery dealers would be fine (9)
6. Heavenly body provided for me in bed (5)
9. Discovering the entrance in the shelter, he gets what is left (7)
10. Perch all round the broken seat, prepared for dinner (7)
11. Farm implement used for common holding (5)
12. Novelist portrayed a cutter in the river (9)
13. Dealers in fashion look amiss among workers (9)
15. Emblem showing a tailless animal (5)
16. Dynasty which includes another (5)
18. When caught in the country before a mountain it shows direction (9)
20. This is bitter, not a sugar concoction (9)
23. We hear the country is in mourning (5)
25. He often turns up to cry about a piece (7)
26. Provide us with it in a poem for the open air (7)
27. Examinations for a philosophical subject in which the head does not appear (5)
28. Beat back before a tory meeting, of course! (9)

DOWN

1. Discards after encouragement (5)
2. What a dog does to a bird? (7)
3. Machine sound when getting ready for shaving (9)
4. Turn out as a player (5)
5. Excelled when got through exam after being almost certain (9)
6. Expert quip (5)
7. Grew up with what the crazy hold strangely true (7)
8. Toy which makes Nelson live in common sailor (5,4)
13. Hair which has a hot music content (9)
14. One of those who like plenty but can only make a run apiece (9)
15. Retreat for boats (9)
17. Subject has broken leg held by a small piece of material (7)
19. Of little importance, like a four in a practice game (7)
21. Places for spectacles in sound (5)
22. Concerned with a conflict (5)
24. Shabby sound of air-raid precautions (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1449



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LISTINGS

SAT 25 AUGUST

BIRMINGHAM 'Working with the Media' CND day school 10am-5pm Trade Union Resource Centre, Frederick St. Adm. £2 (bring packed lunch). **Org. W. Midlands CND, 54 Allison St, Digbeth, B5.**

SUN 26 AUGUST

AYLESHAM, Kent. 2 day Festival 'Mines not Missiles' in support of the miners. Noon till midnight. Org. Canterbury Miners Support Grp./ NUM K.T.U.A. **Details: John Cant 63450 (day)/Jan Cant 57108 (day & eves).**

MON 27 AUGUST

BOLTON Summer Bank Holiday Festival organised by Bolton Socialist Club outside their premises 16 Wood Street 2pm. Bands incl 'Poison Girls', real ale, food, stalls. **Details: Bolton 399494.**

WED 29 AUGUST

29-31 AUG LONDON 'Beyond Poor Images' Poster Exhibition national tour opens at Hendon Library, NW4. **Details: Child Poverty Action Group, 1 Macklin Street, WC2. 01-242 3225/9149.**

SAT 1 SEPT

1-2 SEPT DURHAM 'Making our Future: Change in Women's Education'. Residential conf. for those working with women. Workshops on health, community work, counselling etc. **Details: Eileen Aird, Organising Tutor in Women's Education, WEA Offices, 51 Grainger St, Newcastle upon Tyne 1.**

FORTHCOMING

3-7 SEPT LONDON '5 nights for the Miners' Gala 7pm Royal Festival Hall. All Tickets £5. Bkings: 928 3002/ 3191/ 633 6427. All proceeds to Miners Hardship Funds. **Org. SERTUC/GLC Miners Support Committee.**

4 SEPT BRIGHTON Labour Solidarity Campaign meeting 5pm Old Ship Hotel. Spkrs Alan Tuffin, Roy Hattersley, Peter Shore, John Smith. **Details: LSC 53 Lancaster Grove, London NW5 01-435 6914.**

6 SEPT LONDON 'Future Strategy for CND' Spkr. James Hinton, Projects organiser for National CND. 8pm Tetherdown Hall, Tetherdown, Muswell Hill, N10. Adm. Free. **Org. Muswell Hill CND Jane Morley 01-889 0571.**

6 SEPT BIRMINGHAM 'Is Animal Liberation possible under Capitalism?' Debate between SPGB & 'Animal Aid' (B'Ham grp.) 7.30pm Dr Johnson House, Bull St, B'Ham.

7 SEPT LONDON Edward Carpenter Anniversary Meeting 7pm Gregory Hall, Mecklenburgh Sq, WC1 (entrance off footpath towards Brunswick Sq.) Spkrs. incl. Fenner Brockway, Dora Russell, Sheila Rowbotham with dramatised readings by Gay Sweatshop.

7-9 SEPT BIRMINGHAM West Midlands CND regions & areas development/ campaign strategy weekend. St. Francis Hall, Birmingham University. **Details/biking: WM CND, 54 Allison St, Digbeth, Birmingham B5 5TH. 021-632 6909.**

8 SEPT LONDON 'YTS and reforming Manpower Services Commission' one-day conf. org. Liberal Party Education & Employment Panels. Friends House, Euston Road. £5/£1 unwaged. **Details: 10 Gareth Court, Woodfield Grove, SW16.**

10-14 SEPT. OXFORD 2nd Annual Conf of Howard League for Penal Reform. Pembroke College. **Booking forms: Howard League, 322 Kennington Park Rd, London, SE11 4PP. 01-735 3317/8/9.**

11 SEPT LONDON 'Primary Health Care with Indians in North Peru' Spkr Steve Flew of CIIR. 7.30pm Black Horse Pub, 6 Rathbone Place, W1 (upstairs). **Org. Politics of Health Grp, C/O BSSRS, 9 Poland St, W1.**

11 SEPT LONDON 'One more push for Freedom' march on anniversary of military coup in Chile 1973. 1pm Rally Portland Place, W1 march to Red Lion Square, rally 2.30pm. **Org. Chile Solidarity Campaign 272 4298.**

12-14 SEPT BRADFORD 'Peace Studies in Higher Education' Conf. org. for those who wish to write/speak on their experience of Peace Studies teaching and research and those who wish to learn. **Contact: James O'Connell, School of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, W. Yorkshire. 0274 733455.**

12 SEPT LONDON 'Land Values: Implications for the Health Service' Spkr. Frank Dobson, MP Shadow Health Minister. 8pm GLC, County Hall, SE1. **Details: Labour Land Campaign, 01-267 2245 (eves.)**

13 SEPT LONDON 'Motivation to learn and views of the Self' Annual North Westminster Community School Inner City Education Lecture. Spkr. Prof. Carol Dweck, Harvard Uni. 7pm. Adm. free. **Details: 01-262 8000 x 310.**

13 SEPT LONDON 'Equal Opportunities: Positive Action for Women in Voluntary Organisations' — day conf 10am 4pm. **Details and registration send s.a.e. to NCCL, Women's Rights Unit, 21 Tabard St, SE1 4LA.**

14-16 SEPT LIVERPOOL '1984 the Present, the Future' Politics Assoc. Annual Conf. City of Liverpool College of Higher Education, Prescot, Merseyside. **Details and enrolment: G. T. Prout, Vice Chairman, 64 West Hill Drive, Dartford, DA1 3EA. 0322 75145.**

14 SEPT LONDON Gay Humanist Group AGM 7.30pm Library, Conway Hall Humanist Centre, Red Lion Square, WC1.

14-16 SEPT BIRMINGHAM 'Language & Struggle' 7th Annual Conf of Assoc. for Teaching of African, Asian & Caribbean Literature Wydderington Hall, Uni. of Brum. **Details: Vicky Unwin, 22 Bedford Sq, London, WC1B 3AA. 01-637 3311 (day)/01-960 7887 (eves).**

15 SEPT BIRMINGHAM 'Labour's Non-Nuclear Defence Policy' one day discussion conf for all Labour party membs. £4 per delegate/£1 unwaged. Creche. **Apply: LDLC, C/O Labour Co-ordinating Cttee, 9 Poland St, London, W1V 3DG. 01-439 3749.**

15 SEPT LONDON Gay Humanist Group Gathering to celebrate 5th Anniversary. 7.30pm Library, Conway Hall, Red Lion Sq, WC1.

15-16 SEPT SOUTHAMPTON Women's Health Fair. Voluntary/ Statutory groups, info. on women's health plus workshops, exhibition, demonstrations, theatre grps, food, play area, bookstall. Adm. free. **Details: Ronie Foley, Southampton Women & Health Grp, 29 Dover St, Southampton, SO2 0GG. Phone: 31199.**

16 SEPT LONDON Concert for Chile 7pm Irish Centre, Camden Sq, NW1. Tickets £2.50/£1.50 unwaged from CSC 272 4298 or Camden Labour Centre, 8 Camden Rd 267 1676. **Org. Chile Solidarity Campaign, 129 Seven Sisters Rd, N7.**

18 SEPT LONDON Joint GAS/SSS meeting 'The Statistical Systems of the Metropolitan Boroughs' Spkr. John S. Chapman Head of Intelligence Unit GLC. 4.30pm Manson Theatre LSHTM Visitors welcome. **Details from: Denise Lievesley, SCPR, 35 Northampton Sq, EC1V 0AX 01-250 1866.**

19-21 SEPT YORK 'Africa since Independence' Conf at York University. Panels on politics, media, health, education etc. Cost £55 membs/£65 non membs. **Booking forms, details from UK/Royal African Soc, 18 Northumberland Ave, London, WC2N 5BJ 01-930 1662.**

19 SEPT LONDON Report back meeting of Labour Movement delegation to Chile 7pm Friends' House, Euston Rd, NW1. **Org. Chile Solidarity Campaign 272 4298.**

21-23 SEPT WHITBY 'Socialism and the Media in 1984' Whitby Labour Party 4th Weekend School. Spkrs incl David Douglass Yorks NUM Exec, Roland Boyes MP. Workshops & Socials. **Details: Susan Griffiths, 23 Anchorage Way, Whitby, N. Yorkshire. 0947 605849.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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FAIR, FAT and forty: intelligent and independent woman, teenage children, looking for an adult male friend to unwind and enjoy life with. N. London. Box 9099.

FEMALE 42, W. London, does not wish to become professional bore, rather independent, wants occasional respite from platitudes with humorous male, anyone feel the same way? Box 9090.

GAY PUBLIC School type man, 37, educated, sincere, interested in the arts, history, economics seeks masculine friend, 30-50. Photo appreciated. Box 9091.

GIRL 38, affectionate, informal, loves nature, jazz, reading, seeks very unpretentious, unmarried male friend. Box 9092.

GIRL 27, NW6, mathematician not political, seeks educated friend, 30-35. Photo please, s.a.e. Box 9083.

HANDSOME, COLOURED MALE graduate, 32, 5' 7", would like to meet attractive female, for uninhibited fun, travel & sincere friendship. Photo & phone number would be helpful.
Box 9031

HANTS/ DORSET: bored, tied executive, mid-fifties, non smoker, slim, smart, seeks mutually satisfying friendship; daytimes, nice lunches etc. Box 9104.

IS THERE a man wishing to meet an attractive woman, 30, loves meeting people, travelling, having good times and possibly leading to lasting relationship. Box 9072.

HANDSOME, INDIAN MALE GRADUATE, 30, seeks affectionate, carefree, attractive female for fun, friendship and more. Also interested to meet couples. Please reply with photo & phone no.
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INTELLIGENT MALE (28), interests include: books, art, cinema, music, pubs, talking, listening, seeks female (20-34ish) for friendship, possibly long-term relationship. Manchester or thereabouts. Box 9045.

IT IS time for me to settle! I am pretty, educated, independent. I wish to meet professional man, 49-50, quite urgently. Box 9073.

LIVELY, INTELLIGENT, attractive lady, 50, unattached, seeks gentleman similar, n/s, for companionship – visits to theatre, concerts, cinema, walking initially, later maybe holidays *and who knows what? London area.* Box 9080.

LIVELY, INTELLIGENT woman, 58, Sussex-based but flexible, seeks man friend to share established interests of both and explore new ones. Box 9081.

MALE WORKING in caring profession, 50, divorced, graduate, seeks accommodation and companionship. Possibly loving friendship, with female currently lacking soul-mate. W SW London/ Surrey. Absolutely genuine. Box 9085.

PRESENTABLE, PROFESSIONAL London executive, semi-retired, active, young sixties, seeks younger, comely London lady, any status for discreet, close relationship – based mutual confidence and trust. Am solvent, equable, cheerful man who enjoys good food, wine, music and other normal pleasures. Non-smoker. Box 9106.

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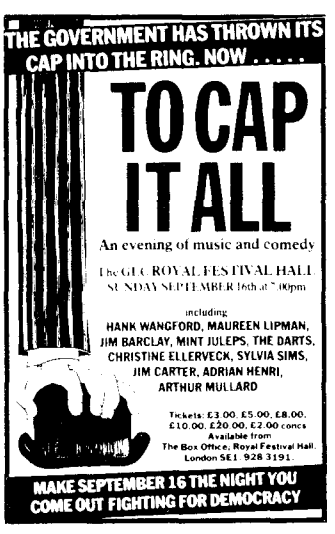
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